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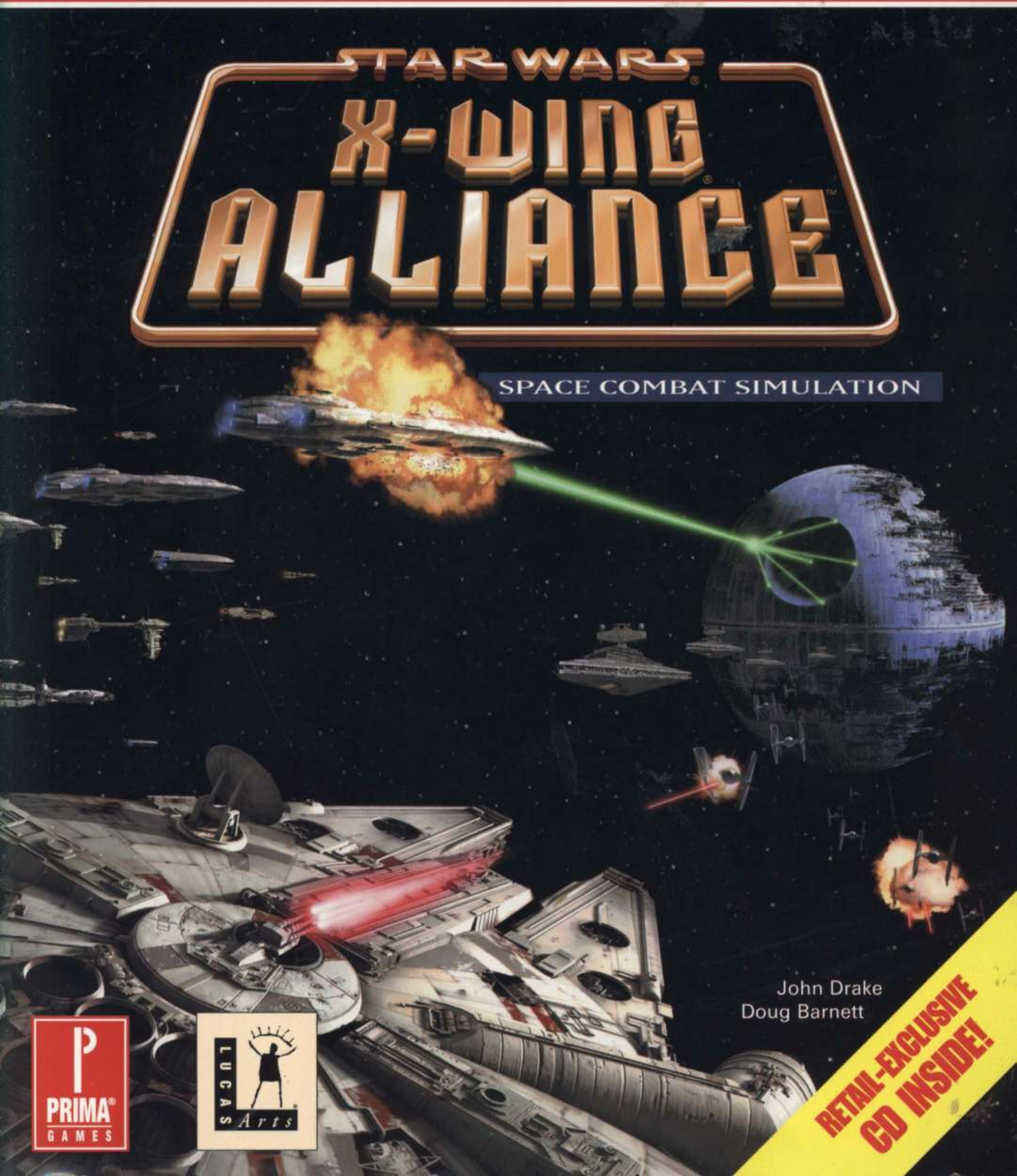

John Drake
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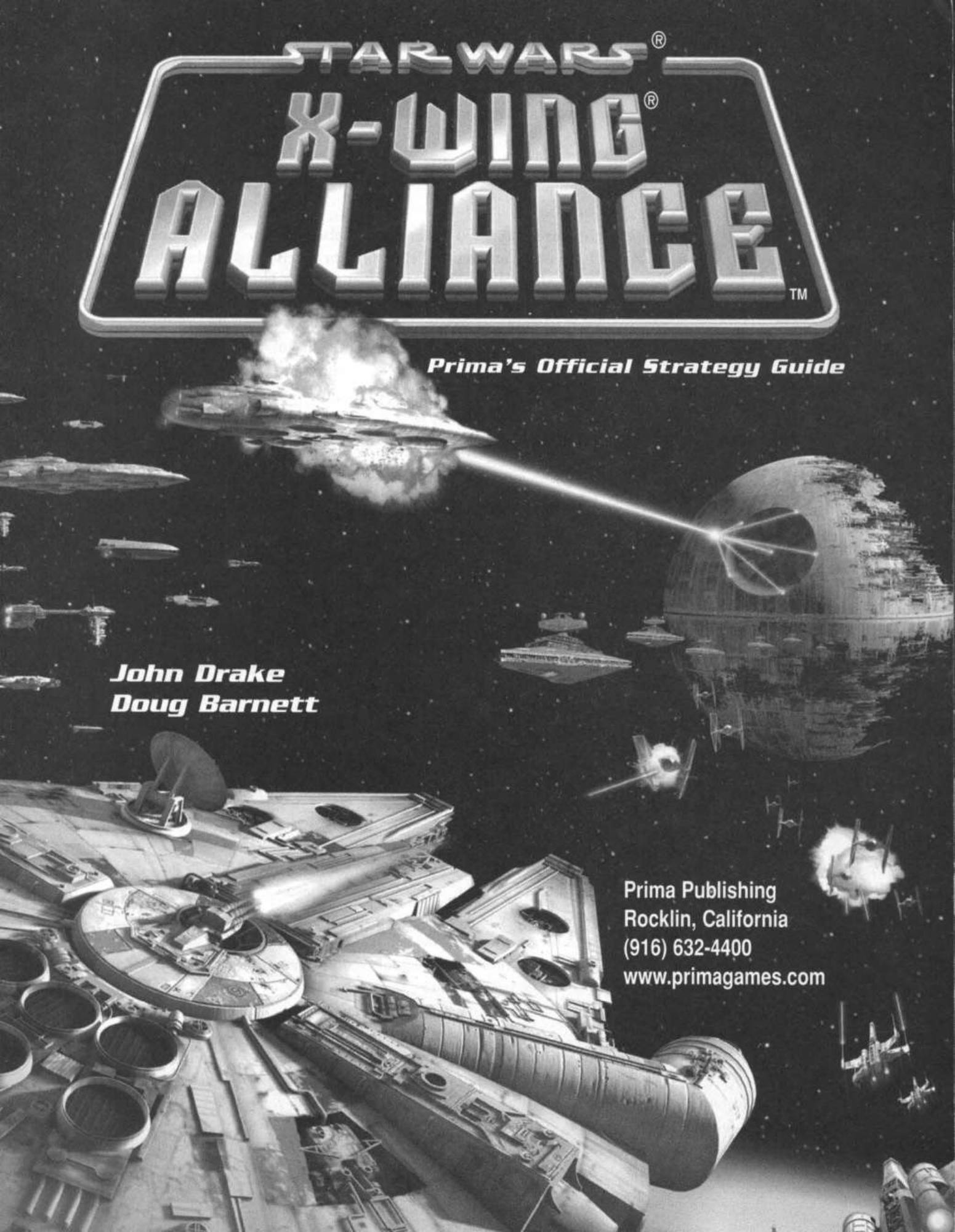
STAR WARS®
X-WING®
ALLIANCE™
Prima's Official Strategy Guide
John Drake
Doug Barnett
Prima Publishing
Rocklin, California
(916) 632-4400
www.primagames.com

STAR WARS X-WING ALLIANCE

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ISBN: 7615-2076-7
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 99-70164
Printed in the United States of America

99 00 01 02 DD 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Acknowledgments:

John Drake
Thanks to my family: Mom and Dad, Robyne and William, Chris, Vicky, Kathy, and Meg. Thanks to: Chris, Brad, Lisa, and Alex for keeping me sane. Thanks also to the LucasFolks who helped out: Dan, Joel, Anne, Phil, Jesse, Buzz, Brent, Grampa, and Allan. And thanks to Doug, for something or other, I forget. A very special thanks to George Lucas.

Doug Barnett
For my mother (MLS) for always being there (tough call). Also thanks to Jason (kept my spirits up), Suzanne (Best Sister Award winner), Susan Tibbon (artistic support), "Star" (for keeping me laughing), William Goldman (showing me the magic of words), Tyger's Coffee Shop (morning medicine), Higher Grounds (afternoon medicine), Sir John Drake (for this opportunity), the folks at Totally Games (for consistently great products), and the fantastic *Star Wars* universe (for existing).

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Introduction

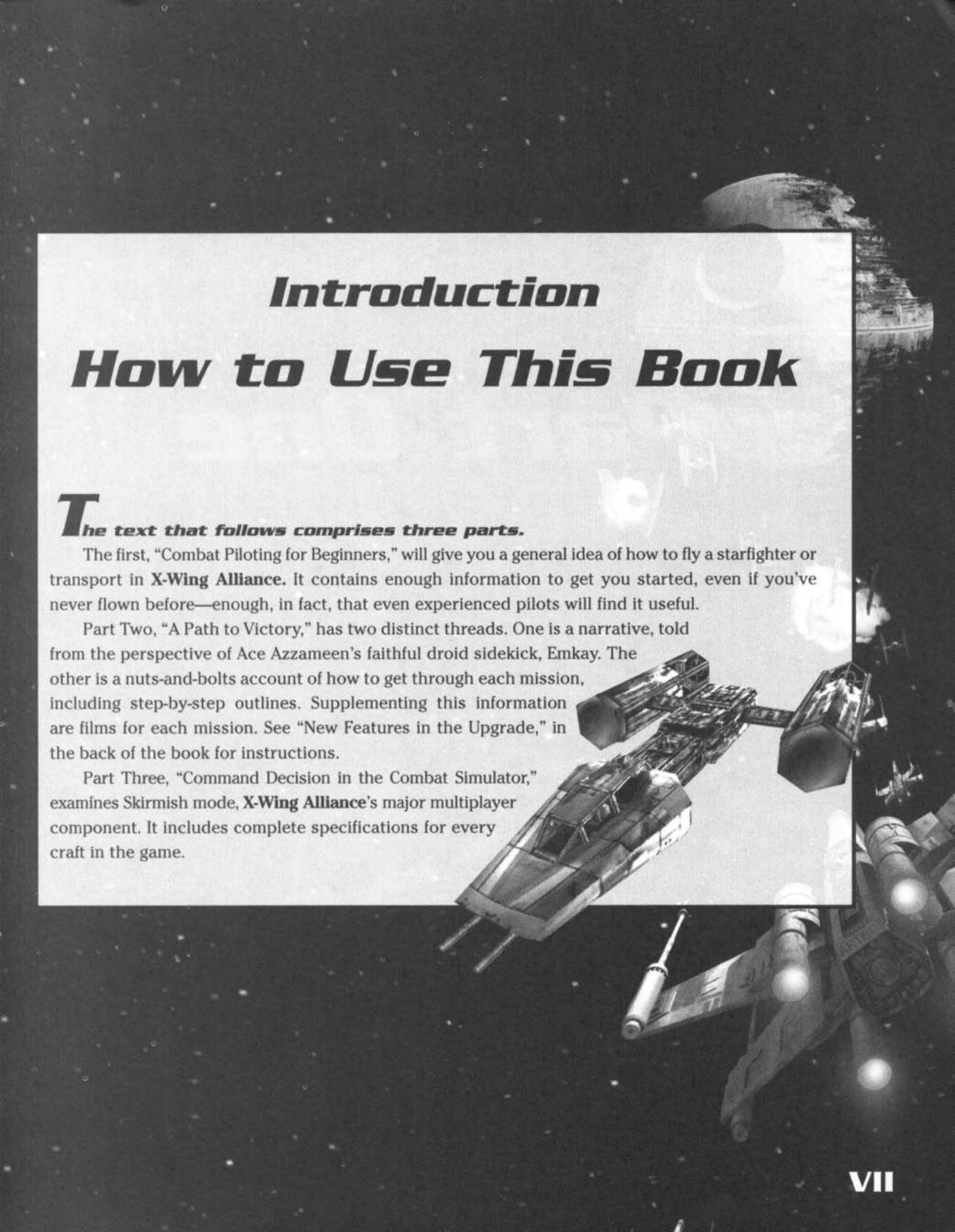
How to Use This Book

The text that follows comprises three parts.

The first, "Combat Piloting for Beginners," will give you a general idea of how to fly a starfighter or transport in **X-Wing Alliance.** It contains enough information to get you started, even if you've never flown before—enough, in fact, that even experienced pilots will find it useful.

Part Two, "A Path to Victory," has two distinct threads. One is a narrative, told from the perspective of Ace Azzameen's faithful droid sidekick, Emkay. The other is a nuts-and-bolts account of how to get through each mission, including step-by-step outlines. Supplementing this information are films for each mission. See "New Features in the Upgrade," in the back of the book for instructions.

Part Three, "Command Decision in the Combat Simulator," examines Skirmish mode, **X-Wing Alliance**'s major multiplayer component. It includes complete specifications for every craft in the game.



Part One

Combat Piloting for Beginners

Anyone who pilots a spacefaring craft is likely to become involved in some form of armed conflict. This text will help pilots who lack the dubious benefit of an Imperial military education gain the upper hand in any form of space combat. Most of this book deals with piloting small craft, such as Corellian transports or starfighters, primarily because an inexperienced pilot is more likely to be at the helm and because larger ships are less tactically sophisticated.

Part One comprises three chapters. The first is a primer, guiding the beginning pilot through the basics of operating a small spacecraft. The second covers spacecraft systems and controls in greater detail and relates them further to the combat environment. The third section offers advice in resolving tactically complex situations for the more advanced pilot.

Chapter 1
The Basics

Space combat in small craft can be complex, but once you become familiar with the controls, it can be reduced to some simple concepts. Unless running is an option, the basic idea is to choose a target and inflict harm upon it without getting blasted yourself. This usually means jinking your craft about to make it more difficult to hit, or maneuvering out of the enemy's firing arc—all while trying to fire accurately yourself.

Basic Flight Control

Joystick Control

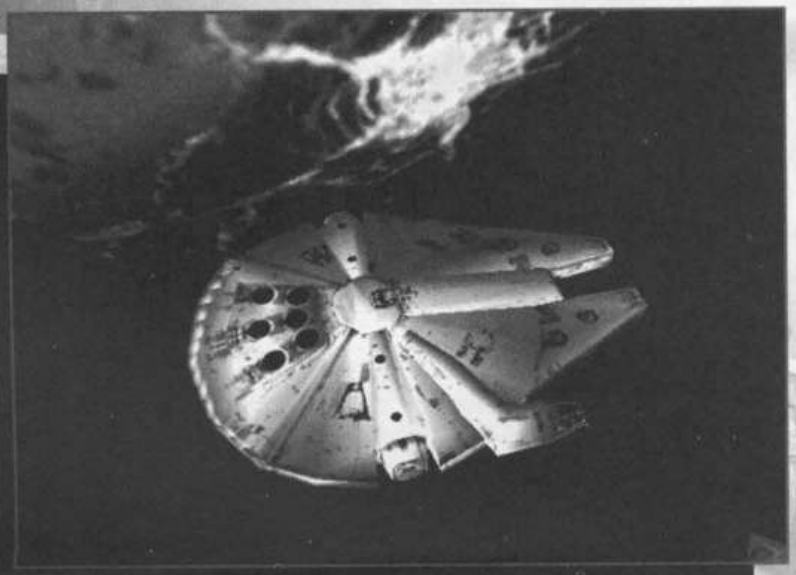


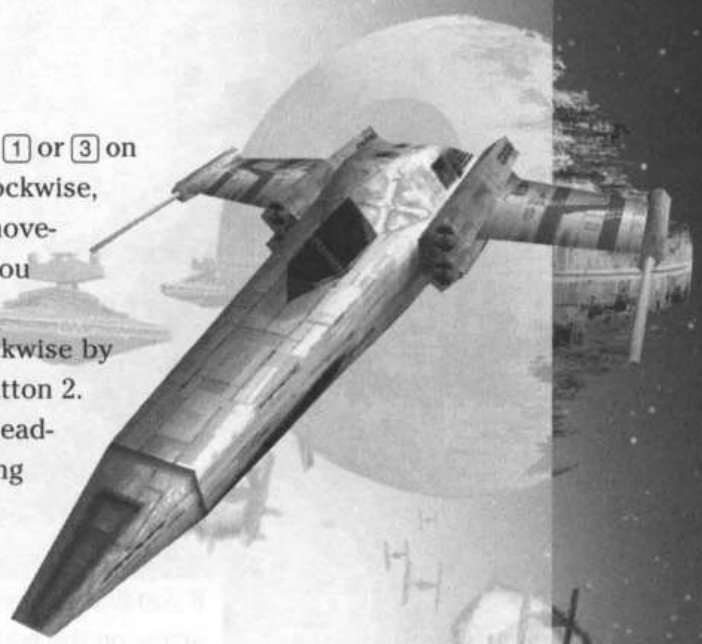
Fig. 1-1. Transport craft rotate instead of banking.

Use the joystick to control your craft's heading. Pull back to raise the nose, push forward to lower it, and pull left or right to bank the craft (if it's a starfighter), or rotate it (if it's a transport-class vessel).

Rudder Control

Most craft can spin around their front-to-back axis. Press 1 or 3 on the numeric keypad to roll counterclockwise or clockwise, respectively. Controller setups with an extra axis of movement on the stick or some sort of pedal system allow you to roll with one hand free for other controls.

You also can roll the craft clockwise or counterclockwise by pulling right or left on the stick as you press joystick button 2. This can be useful for fine adjustments or when you're heading in a straight line, but you're better off using a rolling method that allows you to bank or rotate at the same time.



Throttle Control

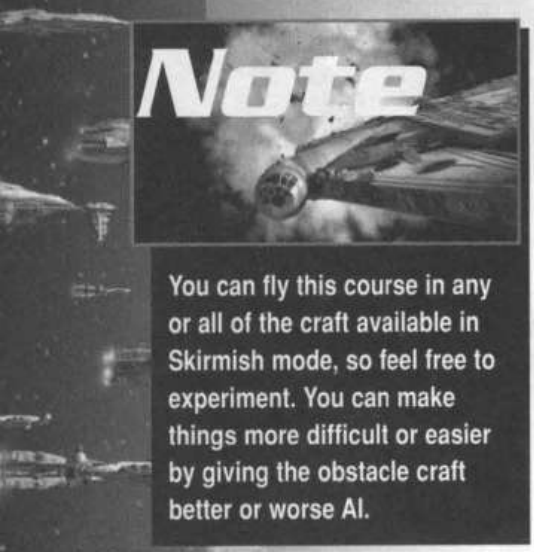
Throttle control determines your craft's current speed. It uses a scale of 0 to 100 percent—the amount of available engine energy you want to apply toward going forward. Preset keys control each third of throttle percentage. You can achieve most throttle control using the keys shown in the following table.

Key	Control
\	Full stop
[	One-third throttle
]	Two-thirds throttle
Backspace	Full throttle

For fine manipulation, use = and - to adjust the throttle up and down, respectively. Press Enter to match the speed of a targeted craft. Gauges for throttle percentage and craft speed are located at the top of the heads-up display (HUD), just left of center.

Throttle control determines your turn radius, as well. You'll achieve your optimum turn rate at 33 percent throttle ([]), with 50 percent of the energy directed toward engines. Get in the habit of dropping to 33 percent throttle whenever you turn, and returning to full after completing the turn.

Let's say there's a pirate R-41 behind you. The best way to deal with it is to try to put it in front of you. If you simply pull back on the stick, your ship will describe a long, slow arc that loops you around—but not quickly enough that the pirate can't follow easily. If you drop your throttle to one-third during your turn, however, the turn will be much tighter, and you might just pull it off.



You can fly this course in any or all of the craft available in Skirmish mode, so feel free to experiment. You can make things more difficult or easier by giving the obstacle craft better or worse AI.

Skirmish: Obstacle Course

The "Obstacle Course" skirmish template will give you a feel for controlling a starfighter or light transport. Your objective is to fly within .2 km of the satellite and inspect it. The "Basic Targeting" section that follows covers inspecting in greater detail. For now, all you need to know is to press [O] to target the satellite, fly toward it, and don't get hit by anything en route. If you find yourself facing away from the satellite, target it and use the yellow arrow on the edge of the screen to help you determine which way to turn.

Basic Targeting

Cycling through Targets

Fig. 1-2. The CMD

While sitting in a starfighter or simulator, the combat multiview display (CMD) is in the bottom center of your field of view. The CMD conveys information about a target's status, cargo, current orders, and facing relative to you. Press [T] to cycle forward through available targets and [Y] to cycle backward.

You can find an object more quickly if you know its affiliation. Press F1 to cycle forward through friendly targets and Shift F1 to cycle backward; F2 and F3 function the same for neutral and enemy craft, respectively.

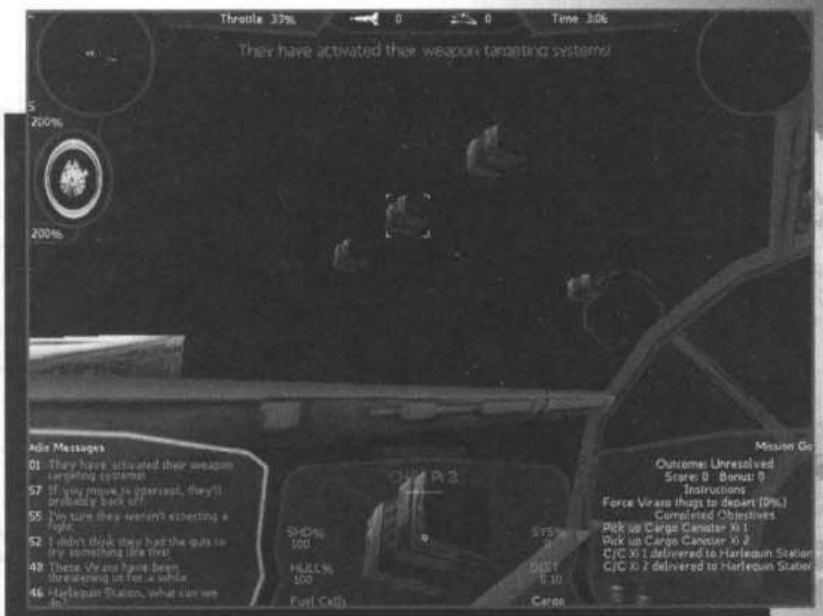


Fig. 1-3. The container with the box around it is targeted.

Targeting Hostile Craft

Press R to target the nearest hostile starfighter, transport, or static defense (mines and their larger cousins, weapon emplacements). Press E to cycle through any craft targeting *you*. If you press A with another craft targeted, you'll target the nearest small craft attacking that target. Press I to target the nearest warhead targeting you; if none are targeting you, this targets the nearest enemy warhead.

Other Targeting Controls

Pressing U targets the most recently arrived craft, and O brings up the nearest mission objective. If a craft is under your targeting reticle, tap joystick button 2 to target it.

Identification and Inspection

When you target a distant craft, you won't know its name and statistics. Flying near a targeted craft will identify it, revealing its name and statistics to you and every member of your team. The range at which you can identify a craft varies based on its size. (See "Charts" in the back of the book.)

Flying even closer to a targeted craft (.2 to .5 km, depending on target size), allows you to *inspect* it, and learn details about its cargo or crew. Such inspection can be a critical mission objective.

For a greater challenge, switch TIE fighter duty from Stationary to Superiority, and change TIE e/5s to TIE fighters.

Skirmish: Inspect-O-Rama

Your objective in this skirmish template is to inspect all primary targets. Use stationary fighters and moving unarmed drones to practice targeting enemies. Moving quickly near the L/FRG makes tracking you more difficult.

Basic Weapon Control

Firing Weapons

Use joystick button 1 (the trigger on most sticks) to fire your weapons. Press [W] to toggle through all equipped weapons systems. If the ship has multiples of the same kind of weapon, you can use [X] to link them. This makes it easier to hit a target with multiple shots, but it decreases your rate of fire.

Cannons

Cannons come in several varieties, but all fire a beam of energy at a target. Because they're rechargeable, they comprise your primary weapon systems.

Gauges at the top of the CMD show your remaining cannon energy. When your cannons are only partially charged, the gauges dim and your cannons won't fire as far or do as much damage as they would when fully charged (gauges brightly lit). As much as possible, try to keep your cannons fully charged. (See the following section, "The Energy System: A First Look.")

The green indicator circle inside your targeting reticle becomes visible when cannons are likely to hit a targeted craft. The indicator will show a target within a fixed range, depending on cannon type; actual range varies.

Cannon blasts exhibit their own speed and duration, which is affected by the speed of your craft: a blast travels farther when you travel faster. That extra .1 km can make a big difference when closing head-on, especially against shieldless craft.

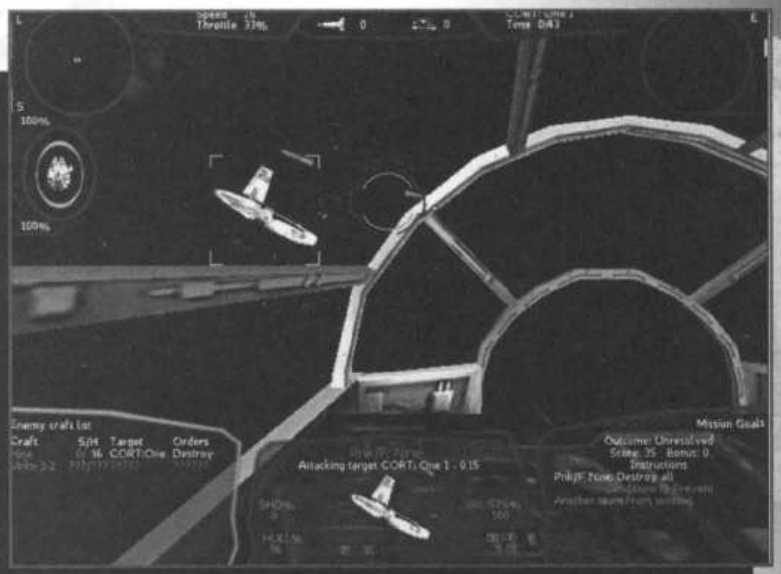


Fig. 1-4. Leading a Target

Cannon Turrets

Some craft of transport size and larger come equipped with cannon turrets that allow a greater arc of fire. Because they let you shoot at things behind you, turreted guns can be wonderful for taking out pursuers. They also can make you more difficult to hit when you attack a large target, because you needn't head straight for it to keep shooting.

To take control of a turret, press [G]. Your craft will travel in a straight line (unless you press [F] to activate autopilot, which tries to keep your topmost turret facing your current target).

Alternatively, you can control the turret or turrets from the cockpit. Press [F] to toggle between defensive fire mode and having the turrets fire at your current target until it's destroyed. Press [X] to lock your turrets forward and fire them with the trigger.

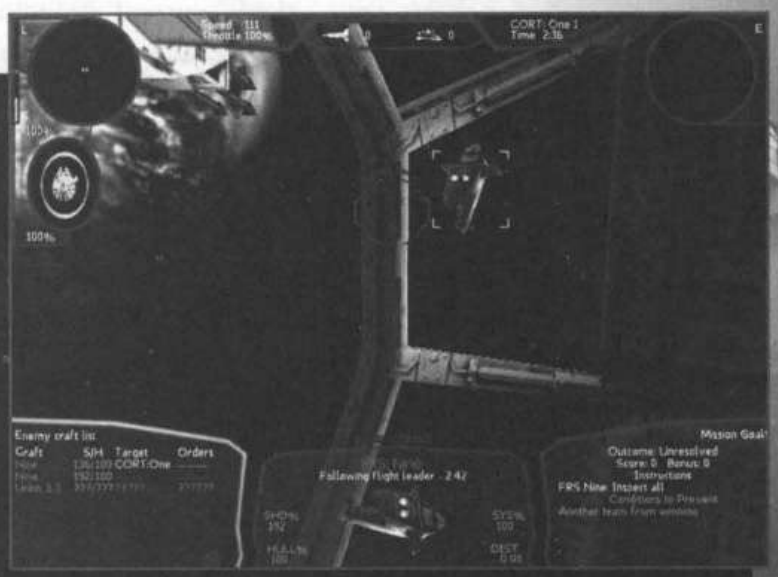
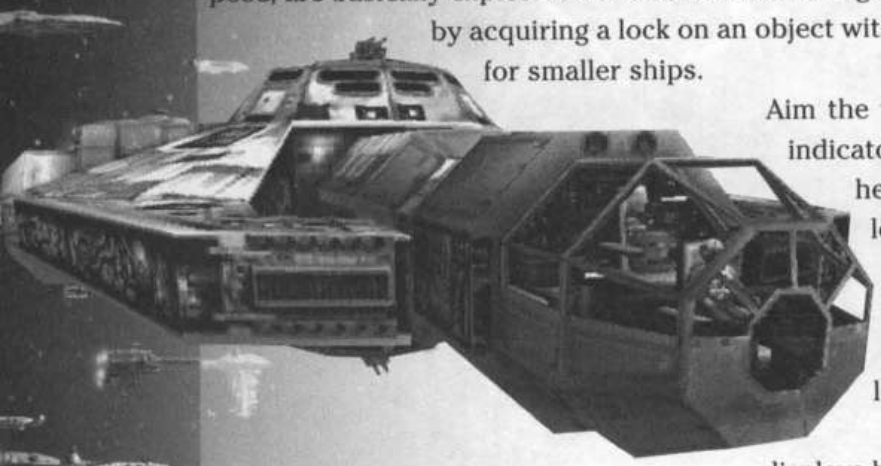


Fig. 1-5. View from the Turret

Warheads

Many starfighters carry warhead launchers of some type. Warheads, which vary in potency and purpose, are basically explosive devices attached to a guided propulsion system. Its target is specified by acquiring a lock on an object within 6 km, for freighter-size or larger, or 2.5 km, for smaller ships.



Aim the warhead reticle at a targeted craft. The lock indicator will change from yellow to red, and you'll hear an intermittent beep. When the target is locked, the beeping becomes a continuous tone. If the target leaves the reticle before you fire the warhead (it moved, or you were forced to evade, for example), you'll lose the lock at the rate at which you acquired it.

The number of warheads in each launcher displays below your targeting reticle.

If a warhead hits your craft, you'll tumble out of control. This is unavoidable, but you can reduce the time you spend spiraling randomly by dropping to one-third throttle just before you're hit. As long as your throttle was set to one-third when the warhead hit, you can speed up immediately after impact.

Shields

Shields deflect harmful energy, preventing a craft's physical components from taking damage. The shield charge indicator shows your shields' current strength at forward and rear facings. Shield damage is applied to the appropriate facing, after which your shields will rebalance themselves immediately. Sometimes one facing is breached before your shields can rebalance, so you can take hull damage even though it looks like you have plenty of shield energy left.

You can apply more shield energy toward a particular facing to protect your approach or retreat. Press [S] to toggle through these settings.

Skirmish: Target Practice

Your goal in this skirmish template is simple: destroy everything. The YT-2000 default carries every type of weapon system described so far. Take this opportunity to familiarize yourself with them all.

The Energy System: A First Look

Balancing Energy

Fundamental to piloting any small craft is balancing the energy usage of each of its primary systems. The Energy System interface permits this. You decide how much energy to apply to your lasers (F9) and shields (F10), and the engines get what's left over.

At this point, you need only remember that a system set to less than maintenance level loses energy, and a system set to more than maintenance gains energy.

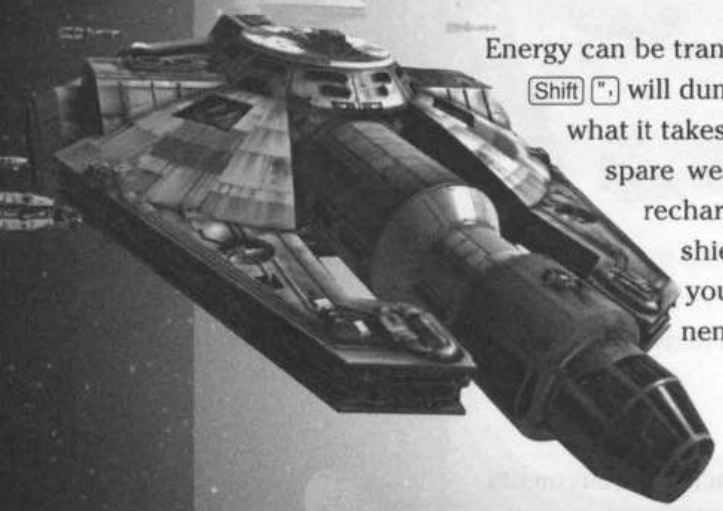
Using the Presets

The Energy System presets can handle most energy balancing requirements for the beginning pilot. They combine throttle control and energy management in one key, so you can adjust your craft's characteristics quickly to meet the needs of the situation. Most craft come with the defaults shown in the following table.

Fig. 1-6. Laser and Shield Recharge Rate Indicators

Key	Effect	Description
F11	Full throttle, lasers at Increased, shields at Maintenance.	This keeps energy entering the system, with a minimal impact on speed. It's a good general-purpose setting.
F12	One-third throttle, lasers, and shields at Maintenance.	This setting gives your craft the optimal turn rate. It's great for close-up twisty dogfights.

Transferring Energy



Energy can be transferred from weapons to shields (["]), and vice versa ([:]). [Shift]["] will dump all your cannon energy to the shield system, or at least what it takes to fill the shields completely. It's usually faster to transfer spare weapons energy to shields than to wait for the shields to recharge. If you're a beginner, the only times you should set your shield recharge at anything higher than minimum are when you're not in combat or you must slow down behind an opponent and you don't expect to need to turn quickly.

Using the Heads-Up Display

The heads-up display (HUD) is your primary method of gathering information about the status of your craft and the world around you. The display itself comprises holographic gauges and windows projected inside your goggles. You may deactivate any part of the HUD at any time. To deactivate the entire HUD, press [Ctrl][End]. Doing so leaves you with only the information you can see with the naked eye, however, so it's never a good idea.

Sensors

The sensor display circles in the upper corners use colored dots to show the relative positions of every craft in the area. The circle on the left shows all craft in front of your ship, and the one on the right shows everything behind you. Dots near the top, bottom, and sides of the circles represent craft above, below, and to the sides of your craft. The brighter the dots, the nearer the craft.

Dot color represents a ship's affiliation as broadcast by its transponder. (Refer to "Charts" in the back of the book for a list of affiliations and their corresponding colors). A yellow bracket displays around targeted craft.

These sensors may be only meaningless dots to you at first. But as you gain experience, you'll learn to relate their movements to the movements of the spacecraft you can see and understand a little of what's going on where you can't see. You can deactivate the sensors using Insert and Page Up—if you don't mind not knowing where anything is.

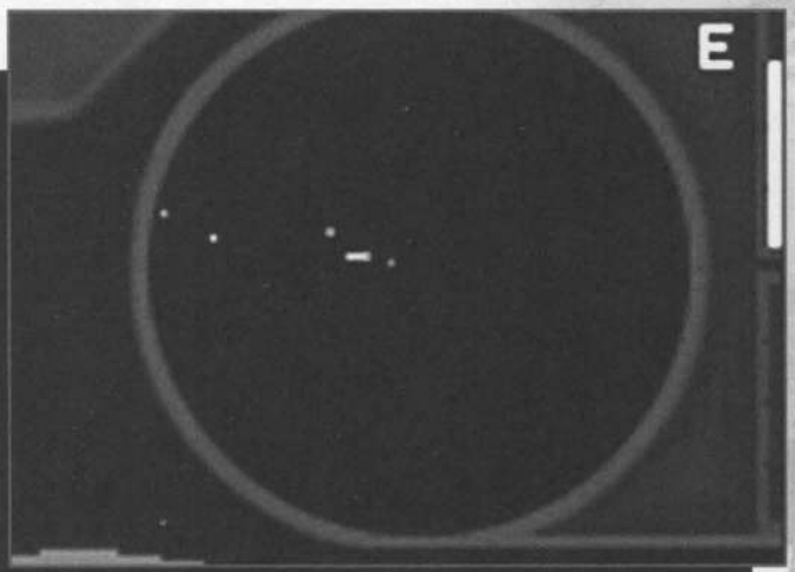


Fig. 1-7. Close-up of the Right-Hand Sensor

Threat Indicators

The four lights over your targeting reticle are your threat indicators. Each activates when your craft comes under a specific sort of threat.

The light on the far left indicates you're under fire from a starfighter or other small craft. Pay close attention to this one: if a starfighter is close enough to shoot you, you haven't much time to dodge.

The next indicator tells you when you're under turret fire. Turret fire can be dangerous, but the need to respond to a turret warning usually isn't urgent.

The second light from the right informs you of a beam weapon threat.

The light on the far right warns of warhead attack, and this indicator behaves a little differently. When the enemy tries to get a warhead lock on your craft, it flashes yellow. If a lock is achieved, the indicator glows red. A warning sounds when a warhead is launched toward you.

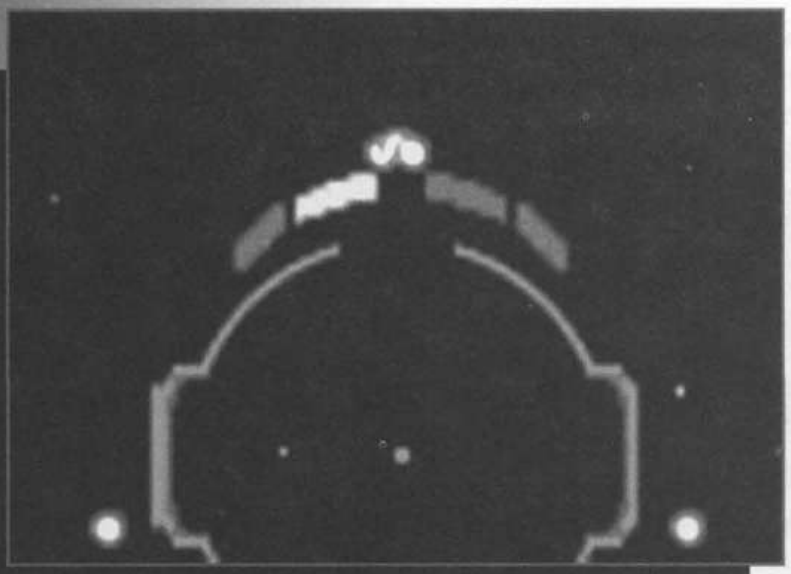


Fig. 1-8. Threat Indicators

Threat indicators are triggered by *targeting systems*. Thus, if you don't target the craft you're shooting at, that craft's pilot receives no warning.

Multifunction Displays

The multifunction displays (MFDs) provide even more information about the combat environment. Press [Delete] and [Page Down] to activate them, and use right and left arrow keys to cycle through display modes on the active MFD. Scroll up and down within a mode with the up and down arrows.

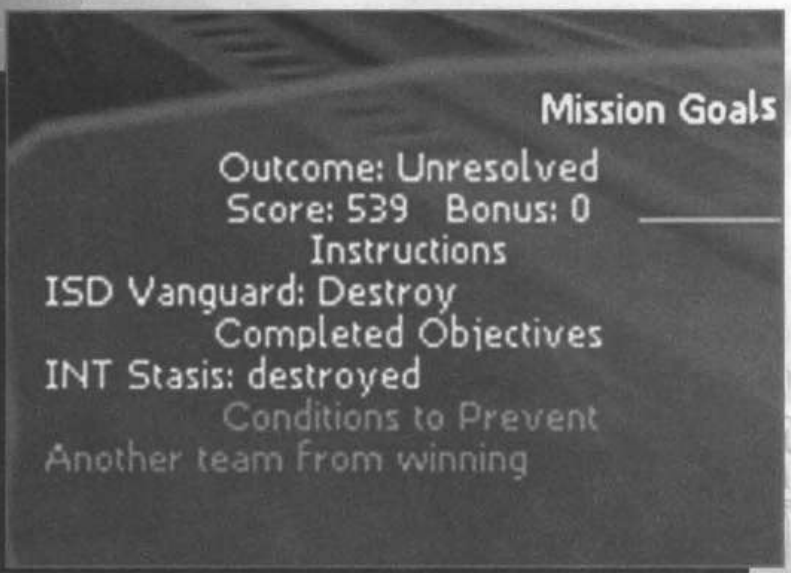


Fig. 1-9. Multifunction Display

The goals display mode shows you all your objectives. Pay attention to percentages. Often you'll be only one or two kills from victory, even when lots of opponents are still in the area.

The friendly and enemy target lists, used together, tell what every craft in the area is doing—when your wingmates or convoy craft take damage, and how much; which craft are attacking what you're supposed to protect, and

which craft are attacking you; even which craft you must destroy or disable or capture. The one drawback is that enemy craft must be identified before information about them will show up in the MFD.

You also can access a report of damage to your craft's systems through the MFD, as well as a log of all radio messages received since mission start.

The CMD and Other Indicators

By now you should be somewhat familiar with the CMD, which comprises the target's name and current orders at the top, a central holographic projection of the target and its facing in relation to you, and target statistics on the sides. The text at the lower right is the target's cargo, and the lower left indicates what component is being targeted. (See "Attacking Large Targets" in Chapter Two for more information about component targeting.) If you want a good view of your cockpit, press End to deactivate the CMD.

The upper row of indicators displays your current speed and throttle percentage, warhead count, and your remaining countermeasures. Deactivate them by pressing Home. The shield/hull indicator lies on the left of your field of view and will deactivate along with the left sensor. It tells you the current strength of each shield facing.

Fig. 1-10. The CMD Again

Basic Dogfighting

No primer would be complete without some information on how to deal with situations that tend to recur in combat. The following paragraphs outline these situations and provide some simple solutions.

Evading Fire

Whether you call it "dodging," "jinking," or something else, the main point of any evasive maneuver is to avoid getting hit. This involves moving your craft unpredictably. You could just yank the stick this way and that to be as random as possible, but you'll be better off if you find a few patterns that work for you and switch between them. Being in control of your evasive tactics gives you more opportunity to gain control of the situation.

Head-On Pass

When any two groups of combatants are closing the distance between them, the result is a head-on pass. This situation tends to be decided just within cannon range, because most pilots will begin evading after taking a few hits. Thus, you're best served by moving as quickly as your craft can when closing between 2 and 1.5 km, to get the longest possible cannon range. Try to be in a position to fire at the opposing craft at all times, even if it's dodging, because you never know when it will turn to face you again.

Incoming Warhead

As soon as you get an incoming warhead alarm, hit [T] to target the warhead. If it's more than 1 km out, you probably have time to turn and shoot it (warheads are easiest to hit head-on). Otherwise, wait until the warhead is about .2 km away before pulling back hard on the stick (and probably dropping to one-third throttle).

Once the warhead passes, turn your craft and try to keep it in front of you. Even if you can't shoot it, keeping it in front of you means you're following it safely, and eventually it will burn itself out.

The Circling Dogfight

Craft with similar levels of maneuverability often end up circling one another at one-third throttle as each pilot tries to line up a shot. Rocking the stick from side to side as it remains pulled back for the loop makes you a more difficult target in these tight turns.

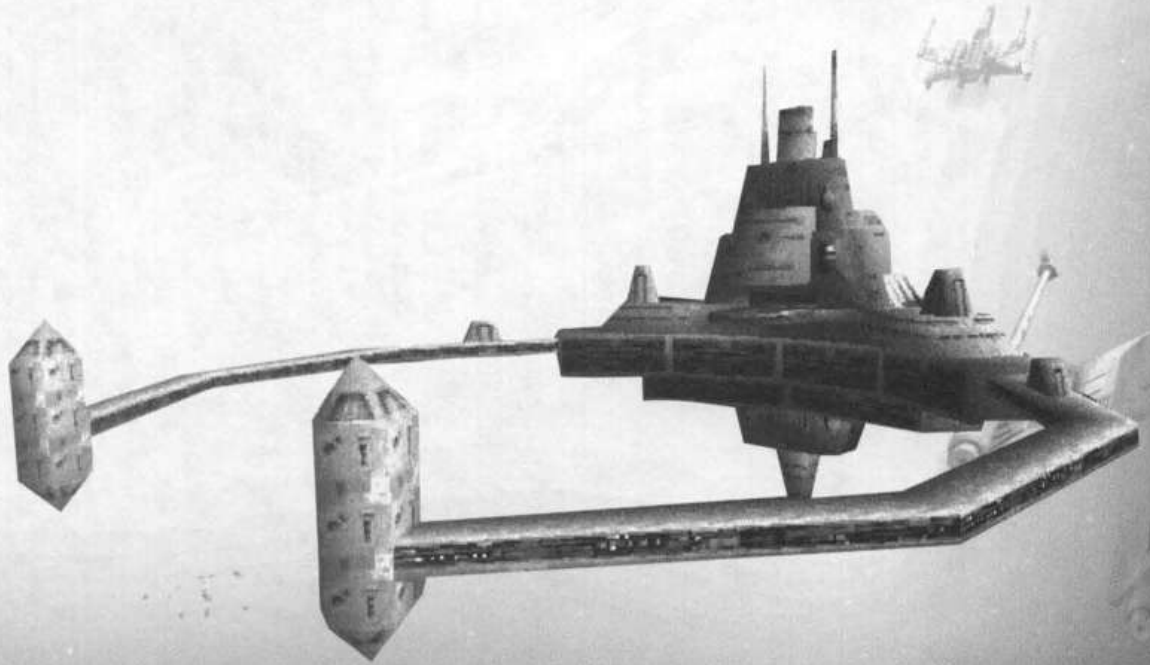
If it seems to be a stalemate, it's possible to break out of a loop: at some point in the turn, hit full throttle and head in one general direction, jinking madly as you go. With any luck, your opponent won't recover quickly enough to prevent you from getting off a shot.

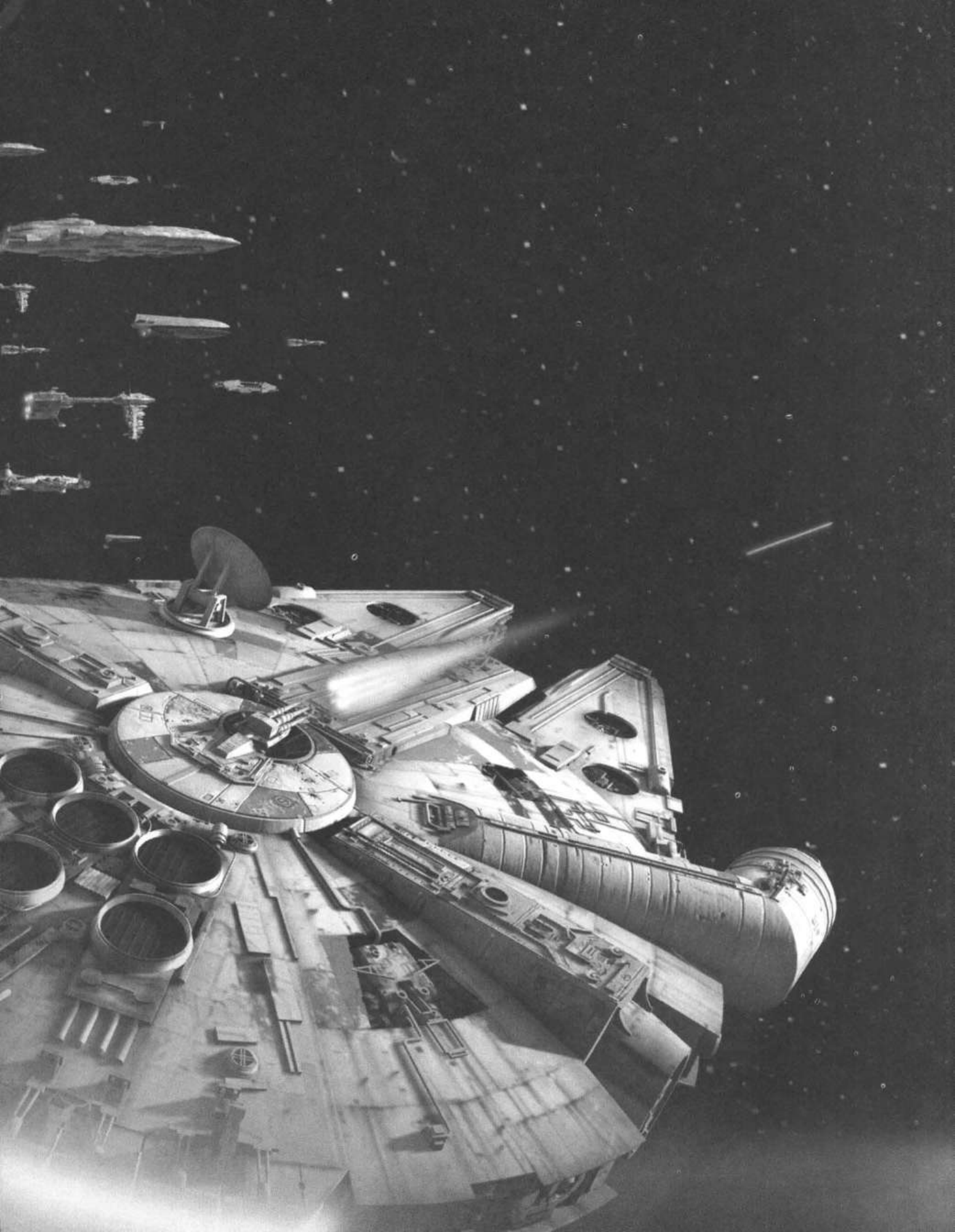
Skirmish: One on One

This simple skirmish template pits you against a Preybird fighter. It has Top Ace AI, so it's pretty mean. Pay particular attention to the foregoing "Head-On Pass" section.

Skirmish: Basics Final Exam

This skirmish template allows you to use every skill you've learned so far. Your goal is to inspect all freighters, and then destroy them. The fighters and the Muurian transport will attempt to stop you.





Chapter 2
Combat Systems and Situations

The basics may help you survive a fight, but to win consistently, you should learn to use every tool you have. A spacecraft isn't a simple machine, but every system and component you can use increases your control of the combat environment.

Using the Energy System

Learning to use the Energy System interface is one of the more difficult hurdles to becoming a pilot, but it's also one of the most rewarding. The elements of the power management system are the weapon (F9), shield (F10), and occasionally beam weapon (F8) recharge rates.

The recharge rate settings determine the amount of energy it takes to charge those systems, as well as what's left over to power the engines. Thus, the less energy you apply to recharging other systems, the faster you can go. Of course, it won't matter how fast you can go if you have no juice left in your laser batteries when the time comes to fight. You must find the right balance of engines-to-other-systems, based on the situation at hand.

Understanding Recharge Rates

You can set each element of the energy system to one of five positions.

- Maintenance: The default middle position; the system neither gains nor loses energy. Useful when systems are completely charged and you don't want to lose energy.
- Increased recharge: The system recharges about half as quickly as it could; reached by pressing the appropriate key once from the default position. Don't neglect this, especially for laser recharge: the speed you gain from not recharging at maximum rate can make your craft harder to target.
- Maximum recharge: The maximum rate at which energy can be added to that system; two key presses away from the default position. Although it's sometimes necessary to power a system as quickly as possible, keeping multiple systems at maximum recharge is rarely a good idea when hostiles are in the area.
- Maximum redirect: No energy is set aside to maintain that system; three key presses from default. The system steadily loses its charge until it's empty. It might not seem like a good idea to turn off your shields or weapons, but it can be useful in the right situation, especially when speed is important.
- Partial redirect: The system loses energy at about half the rate it would if the system got no energy at all; four key presses from the default. This is probably the least useful setting. Consider it something you skip over on the way to the setting you really want.

Settings Combinations

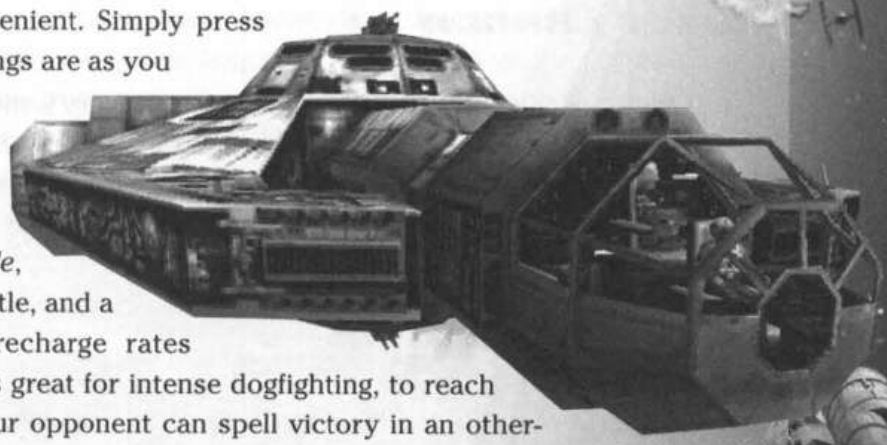
Although there are 25 possible combinations of cannon and shield recharge rates, not all are important. Here are some useful power settings.

- Weapons at maximum, shields off: The ideal dogfight setting; engines are at 50 percent power, and energy enters the system faster than it leaves. At one-third throttle, this yields the optimal turn rate. Even though shields are off, in a tight turning situation you'll have enough excess cannon energy to keep them from losing much.
- Weapons at increased, shields off: Sacrifices maneuverability slightly, but grants enough extra speed to make it slightly more versatile. Useful for dogfighting multiple opponents, attacking capital ships, and closing to dogfight range.
- Weapons at increased or maximum, shields at maintenance or increased: Useful for attacking slower craft such as bombers, gunboats, and transports.
- Weapons off, shields at maintenance: Ideal for patrolling, pursuit, and any other time you need to go fast without shooting at something immediately. Cannon energy is just a shield transfer away. Just don't forget to turn your guns back on!

- Weapons off, shields off: Devotes all available power to the engines. This can leave you at a disadvantage if you do it for too long, but sometimes the extra effort is necessary when lives are at stake. It can be especially vicious to do this briefly as you close head-on to increase cannon range.
- Weapons at maximum, shields at maximum: In terms of speed and maneuverability, this is the equivalent of a Hutt squatting on your starfighter. You'll rarely or never use this configuration if you're under fire: the increase in shield energy won't balance the loss of maneuverability. This setting has its uses, though. If you must destroy something large with cannons, and you want to keep them double-charged, this is a good way to get the extra laser energy. It's also the quickest way to recharge your shields during a lull in the fighting. Just make sure to switch to something more responsive at the first sign of a threat.

Customizing Your Presets

You can configure your energy system presets to the power and throttle settings you find most convenient. Simply press Shift F11 or Shift F12 when your settings are as you want them.



There are several strategies to consider when assigning your presets. By default, they're set up to toggle between a *standard cruising mode*, for general-purpose flying at full throttle, and a *dogfight mode*, with throttle and recharge rates adjusted for optimal turn rate. This is great for intense dogfighting, to reach maximum maneuverability before your opponent can spell victory in an otherwise even match-up.

Another option, somewhat more useful for flying multirole missions, is to assign useful presets close to other frequently used settings. For instance, try setting F11 to full throttle, weapons at increased recharge, shields at maximum redirect, and F12 to full throttle, weapons at maximum, shields at maintenance. Pressing F11 gets you a setting ideal for high-speed dogfighting or attacking capital ships, and it's only a press of F9 and a throttle adjustment away from maximum maneuverability. F12 is good for less speed-critical tasks, such as taking out transports and bombers, and if you press F9 once and dump all your lasers to your shields, you get a great pursuit mode. Your shields will store that laser energy until you need it, and you can move quickly until then.

Beam Weapon Recharge Rates

Beam weapons are covered later in detail, but their effect on the energy system should be mentioned here. A craft equipped with a beam weapon has 1.5 times its normal energy capacity. That means the craft's top speed, with everything redirected to engines, is 1.5 times what it would be without the beam weapon.

Weapon Systems

In combat, surprise can mean death. It pays to prepare by learning to recognize—and, if possible, to *use*—every existing weapon.

Cannons

Laser Cannon

The laser is the most basic cannon type. Almost every armed spacecraft uses lasers to deal damage. The Rebellion's starfighters are equipped with lasers that have an average range of about 1.5 km. Some craft use heavier laser cannons, called turbolasers. These fearsome devices have a rapid rate of fire, and each blast does substantially more damage than a standard laser.

Ion Cannon

Ion cannons can disable just about anything you'll encounter. A disabled craft can't move or shoot, and it's generally faster to disable a ship than to kill it. Unfortunately, ion cannons can't disable a shielded craft, but they'll damage shields as much as lasers do. On the downside, you can't use ion cannons to destroy a target, and their range is slightly shorter than lasers'. Most ion cannon–equipped craft also carry lasers and allow the two systems to be linked for a devastating combination.

Laser Convergence

Craft with cannons mounted far apart generally use some sort of laser convergence system, activated with [Z]. Also called "gun harmonization," this technology allows you to focus cannon fire on a single point. Older starfighters, such as the Z-95 and the R-41, use a manual laser convergence system, and pilots must use [Z] to choose the distance at which these craft focus their lasers. Other craft, such as the X-wing and the TIE interceptor, will focus cannon fire automatically at a point equal to the distance from the target.

Warheads

Concussion Missiles

Concussion missiles are used primarily for dogfighting—generally when closing on an opponent, because it can be hard to get a lock in a tightly twisting dogfight. As a rule, however, it isn't a good idea to fire warheads when closing head-on, because that makes them easy to shoot down. The basic concussion missile is easy to evade using a quick last-second turn, and it's best used as a distraction or against targets that aren't likely to do quick last-second turns—rookie Y-wing pilots, for example. Advanced concussion missiles, on the other hand, are fast, deadly, and hard to evade. The only real downside is the expense.

Proton Torpedoes

Proton torpedoes are perhaps the most commonly used warheads in the galaxy. They're too slow to be reliable starfighter killers, but against anything larger they can be devastating. Even capital ships will succumb to a torpedo barrage from a squadron of starfighters. Advanced proton torpedoes are arguably the most versatile warheads available. They're fast enough to be used against slower starfighters and can kill anything short of a B-wing in one shot. There are better heavy attack weapons, but advanced torpedoes serve quite acceptably in this role and can be harder to shoot down because they are faster.

Heavy Rockets

Heavy rockets are the most efficient heavy strike weapons, in terms of the amount of destructive power a single ship can carry. Although slow and easy to shoot down, they can turn two heavy fighters into a serious threat to any capital ship or installation.

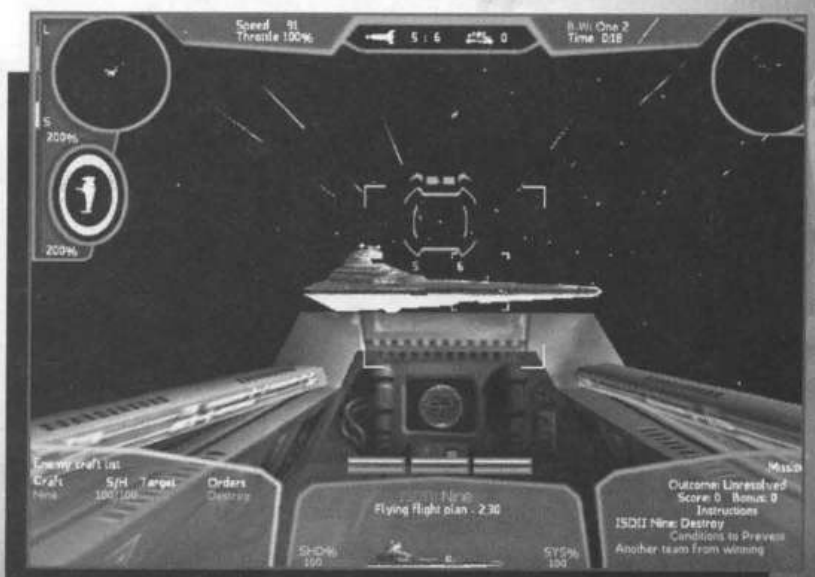


Fig. 2-1. Torpedoes are most useful when there are a lot of them.

Space Bombs

Space bombs are less efficient than heavy rockets on a per-volume basis, but they make up for it by being more difficult to see in the blackness of space, and thus much harder to target.

Mag Pulse

Mag pulse warheads are unique in that they do no damage to the shields or hull of a craft. Instead, they disable their target's weapons systems, knocking them out for 30 seconds per warhead. A mag pulse attack can ensure the success of a heavy strike mission by preventing the target from shooting incoming warheads.

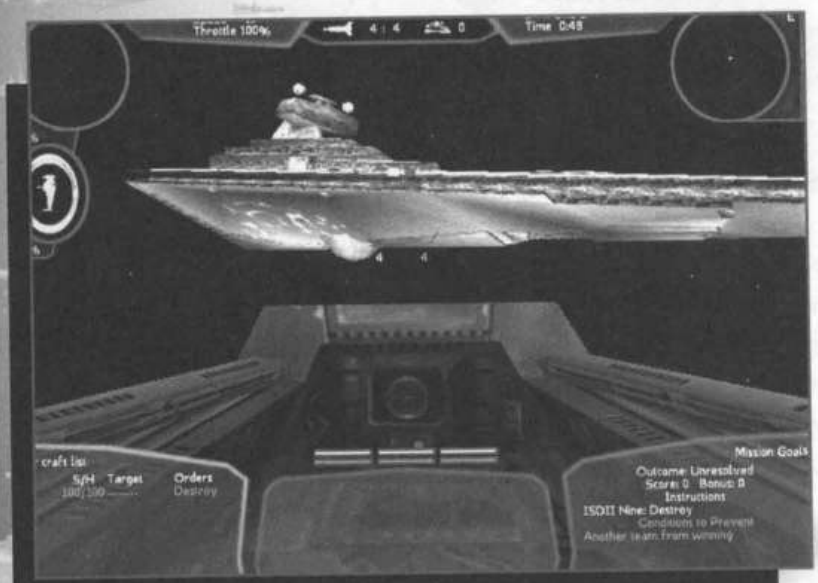


Fig. 2-2. Victim of a Mag Pulse Attack

Ion Pulse

Ion pulse warheads behave like a cross between proton torpedoes and ion cannons. They disable and damage shields the same as ion cannons do, but are guided warheads instead of energy beams. They're ideal against capital ships, because they can disable more rapidly and from farther away than ion cannons can.

Warheads aren't unavoidable instruments of death. They can be shot down or evaded. In fact, if you're the defender in an attack on an installation or capital ship, shooting down enemy rockets, bombs, or torpedoes can be the best way to keep your mission-critical craft alive. Press [I] to target the closest enemy warhead. It's a good idea to check for them periodically when you're defending something. Warheads can be difficult to hit from an angle, so approach them from the front or back when you can.

Fig. 2-3. Warhead defense will become a familiar activity.

Situational Awareness

Usually, space combat is about more than just finding the nearest target and blowing it up. Knowing how to choose your targets to suit your mission objectives can be as useful as any dogfighting technique.

The In-Flight Map

Press [M] to access the in-flight map. Because the map is projected opaquely on your flight goggles, for safety's sake your flight controls are disengaged when you bring up the map. (Make sure you're not on a collision course when entering the map!) Press [Spacebar] to toggle between a 2-D "top-down" mode and full 3D.

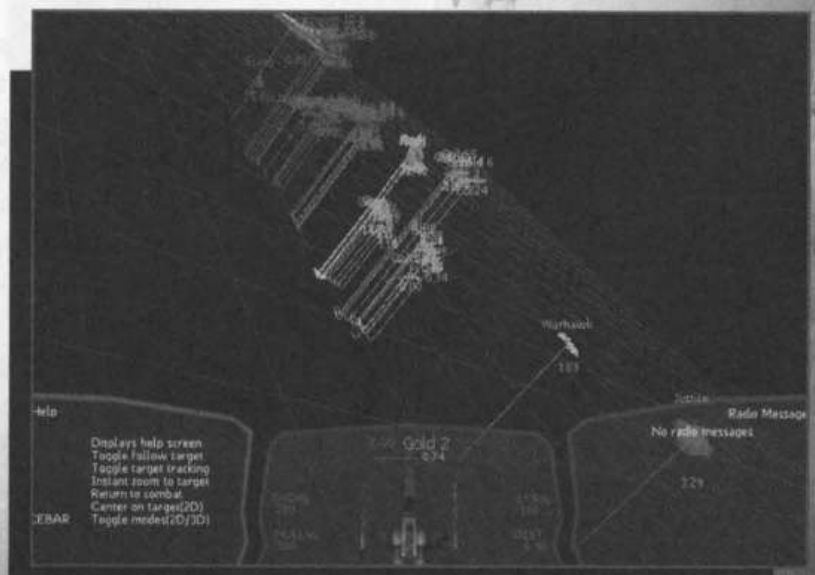


Fig. 2-4. The In-flight Map

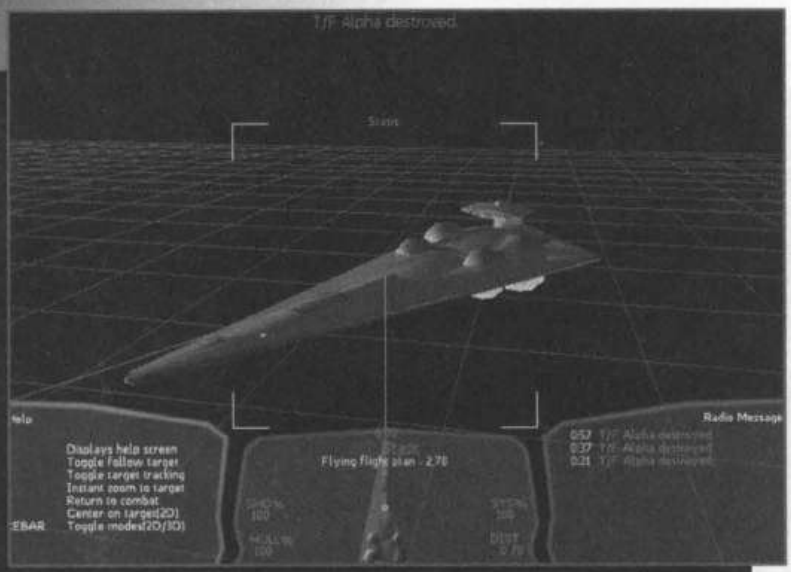


Fig. 2-5. Using the Map to Spy

The map is useful for getting a picture of the situation quickly when many craft enter the area at once. It can also give you an idea of how close items are in relation to each other, so you can determine where you must be to intercept. You also can use the map to get a clear picture of targets that are too well-defended to approach physically. Target the craft you want to observe, and then use joystick button 1 to zoom in. You can use the joystick to rotate around to get the view you want.

Prioritizing Targets

A passing familiarity with each key of the targeting system isn't always enough. You must be able to pick the correct target under pressure. Always consider priorities when seeking your next target: what's your mission objective, and what's your role in the completion of that objective? Usually, mission briefings assign you a "duty," which can be a clue to how to prioritize.

If you must escort certain craft, assign them to your targeting computer's memory locations (F5–F7). Check for targets attacking them (A while your charge is targeted) before checking to see if anyone's after you (E). If nothing is after either of you, consider attacking the closest target—but only if it won't draw you too far from the ships you're protecting. Keep alert for enemy warhead attacks, as well.

If you end up with heavy strike duty, your top priority is to launch all your warheads at the targets you're trying to destroy. Any responsibly-planned strike mission should have fighters assigned to cover the strike craft, so let them do their jobs whenever possible. You might have to turn and fight occasionally, but if you dodge well, your fighter support will get rid of whatever's after you. Once you've delivered your payload, you can start thinking about clearing fighters, but only if it looks like the warheads will do the job.

Flying superiority can be tricky. Sometimes it involves taking out heavy strike craft, and sometimes opposing superiority fighters are the priority. The important thing to remember is to choose your target based on what will improve your side's control of the situation. Are the opposing superiority forces disrupting things? Go for them. Will those gun platforms prevent your strike craft from getting close? Take them out. Is that hail of torpedoes headed for the command ship? Intercept them. Superiority demands spontaneous decision-making.

Attacking Large Targets

Larger ships and installations are factors in many space-combat situations. Knowing how to avoid, distract, or even destroy one of these behemoths can be vital for smaller craft, and it pays to learn their weaknesses.

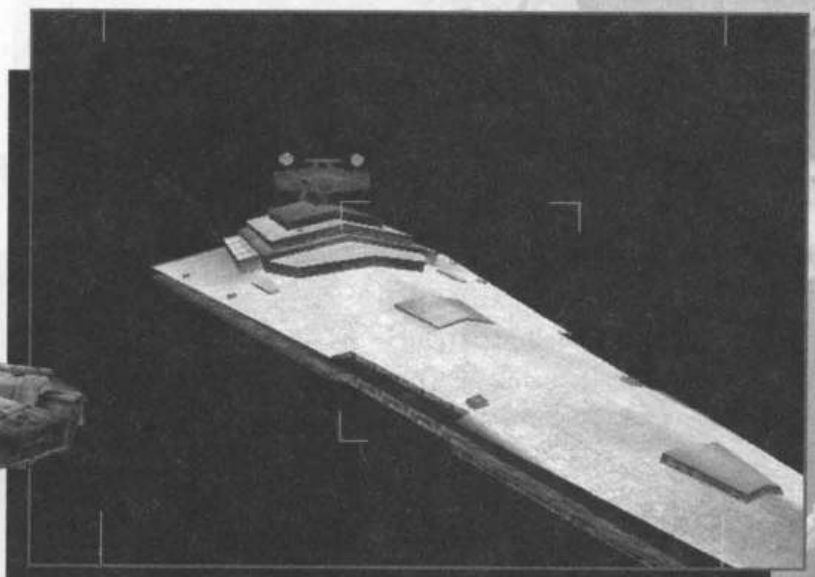


Fig. 2-6. The Imperial Star Destroyer is the ultimate large target.

The Approach

Many capital ships, such as the *Imperial*-class Star Destroyer, have a cannon range far greater than a typical starfighter's. Therefore, you must begin evasive tactics at distances as far as 6 km from the target. "A Smuggler's Guide to Spacecraft" is a terrific reference for learning the range of every ship's weapons.

Faster targets are harder to hit, so the closer you get to a large craft, the more quickly you should be moving. Try not to fly in a straight line for more than a few seconds. It should be possible to dodge your target's fire and still hit it with most of your cannon blasts.

Dumb-firing

Potentially the most useful tactic to remember when taking out large targets is dumb-firing—launching warheads without a lock. Turret gunners use electronics almost exclusively for target acquisition, and if a warhead isn't actively locked on, it's not going to show up on their scans. Paradoxically, dumb-fired warheads are more likely to impact with a target than locked-on warheads. Note that sudden turns or rapid movement on the target's part can make this technique difficult, so be sure your target is unlikely to get out of the way before you dumb-fire.

The holofilm *Dumb-fire* examines the difference between firing with a lock and dumb-firing.

Attacking Components

Shields generally diffuse destructive energy and prevent structural damage, but it is possible to punch through them by focusing on a particular point. This allows you to destroy individual components before dealing with the shields.

Generally, the first component to destroy on any large ship should be the shield generators. This takes down its shields and prevents them from recharging. It's almost always faster to take out shield generators than it is to lower shields, assuming the shield generators are exposed.

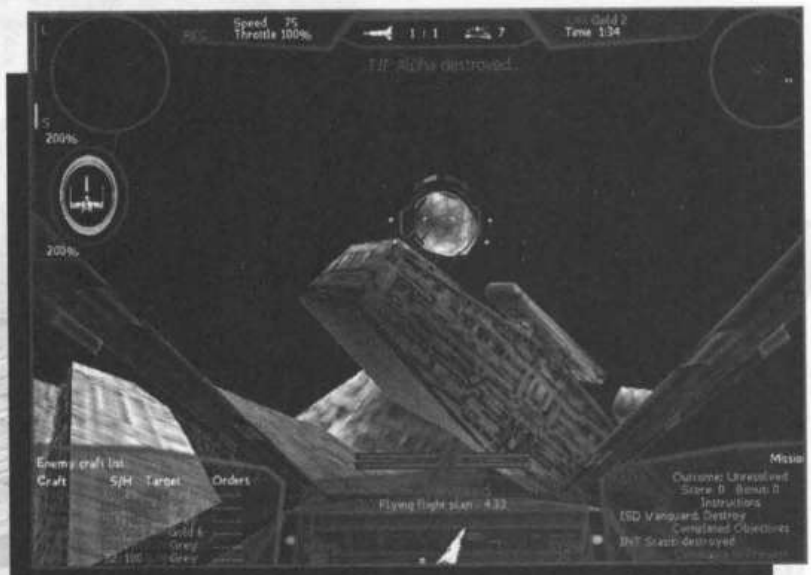


Fig. 2-7. Attacking the Shield Generators of an ISD

If a capital ship seems likely to escape, its engines may take higher priority than the shield generators. Each engine you destroy slows a ship; destroying them all will stop it.

It's also possible to destroy a ship's weapon systems—either by taking out individual weapons or by destroying the sensor clusters that guide weapons fire. Although it can be useful to clear one side of a ship to give yourself a safe zone, destroying every weapon system can take as much time as destroying the entire ship, and is no less dangerous.

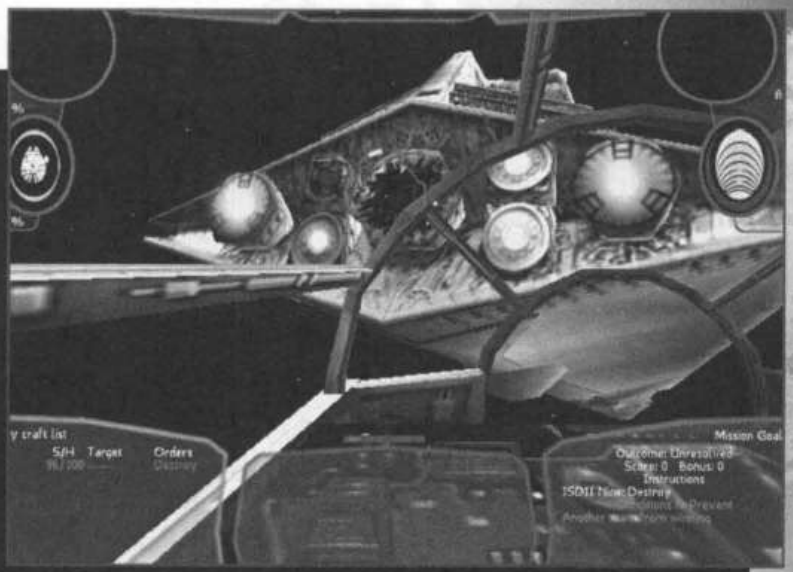


Fig. 2-8. Take out those engines!

To see a capital ship being picked apart piece by piece, check out the holofilm *Pulling Teeth*.

Choosing your Weapons

The weapons you choose to attack a large target will determine your attack's difficulty. Far and away the most useful weapon for many fighters is the mag pulse warhead. One or two craft armed with mag pulse can suppress a target's cannon fire and enable the heavy rockets of other attacking craft to hit without getting shot down. Even forces armed exclusively with mag pulse can succeed, because it's not that risky to get within cannon range of a suppressed craft.

Mag pulse warheads are uncommon, however, so it pays to have other options. Disabling weapons, such as ion cannons, are a must for any serious attack on a large ship. Once shields are down, it's easier to disable a ship than to destroy its hull. Because ion pulse warheads pack a lot of disabling power in a single shot, they're perfect for disabling something in a hurry.

Turreted Craft

If you're lucky enough to have a gunner turret on your craft, you have a significant advantage when attacking large targets: you don't have to face them to shoot at them. It's far more difficult to hit a target moving perpendicular to you than it is to hit one coming at you head-on. This can allow turreted craft to attack large targets and come away virtually unscathed. For best results, use G to enter the turret, acquire your target, and then use F to engage the autopilot. As soon as you come into range, turn autopilot off, because it tends to match speeds with the target once it's in perfect view of the turret. This is useful against fighters, but sitting still near a capital ship's guns will get you killed. As you pass out of range, reengage the autopilot long enough to turn around, and then disengage it again. Repeat as necessary.

The holofilm *Tricky Turret* demonstrates a turret's usefulness against capital ships.

Dogfighting Multiple Opponents

It's not much fun to be outnumbered. Still, it happens, and you must learn to deal with it. The approximate skill of the pilots involved is the most important factor for determining the most fighters you can engage safely. Taking on four or five Novice pilots is far easier than engaging two Aces.

Multiple opponents can change the way you approach a head-on pass. If there are more than three attackers in a group, you probably won't get them all to break off before taking heavy damage, unless they're unskilled. If you're dealing with multiple Aces, it's best to avoid a head-on completely. Against less-skilled pilots, you can get away with heading toward them at a slight angle and dodging their fire as you get close, but better pilots are certain to get a piece of you in that situation.

One technique that works fairly consistently is to fly away from the attackers just slowly enough for them to catch up. Once they get close enough to start shooting, loop around behind them, jinking erratically. This way you fly perpendicular to your attackers as they shoot at you, and become more difficult to hit.

The holofilms *TIE Swarm* and *Ace Melee* show examples of dogfighting multiple opponents of varying skill levels. Try the skirmish templates with the same names to see how well you do in those situations.

Basic Wingmate Orders

It's seldom wise to fight alone. Not only is it nice to have someone to assist you, but often a divided force can accomplish things a lone pilot can't.

To further such coordinated efforts, most combat-capable starcraft are equipped with communications systems that broadcast encrypted targeting information to friendly craft. The typical system has two modes of operation—one for accessing a few useful messages quickly, and one for giving detailed commands to individual pilots. Beginners will find the basic system provides ample control, but the flexibility the complete system affords can greatly expand your combat capability.

Basic Wingmate Commands

Keys	Command	Description
Shift A	Attack my target	Orders all craft in your squadron to attack the craft you target until it's destroyed. (Keep in mind that this pulls them away from whatever it is that they're doing.)
Shift I	Ignore my target	Orders all craft in your squadron *not* to attack the craft you target. Only one craft may be ignored at a time.
Shift C	Cover me!	Orders all craft in your squadron to attack the nearest craft attacking you. This is useful only if your wingmates are close enough to you to intercept your attackers quickly. They'll stop what they're doing to come help you.
Shift E	Evade	Orders your target to take evasive maneuvers. Some pilots won't realize they're in danger until they start getting hit, so a little warning can save lives.
Shift R	Report in	Targeted friendly craft will give you some information about its current flight plan.
Shift W	Wait for orders	Targeted friendly craft comes to a complete stop and will not take action unless fired on. This leaves them nearly helpless should they come under fire, so use it carefully.
Shift G	Go ahead	Causes targeted waiting craft to return to their former flight plan.
Shift H	Head home	Orders targeted craft to hyper home or head for the command ship. This order is irrevocable, so take care not to send somebody away that you might need later.

The "Classic Conflict" skirmish template, found by default in the Combat Simulator, will let you examine a relatively straightforward engagement in a multitude of roles and weapons configurations. Fly it in each of the eight fighter groups until you can win it in every one.

Chapter 3
Advanced Techniques

By now, you should have some idea of how to be a successful combat pilot. There are still a few skills to learn, however. What follows provides some helpful tips, as well.

The Flight Orders MFD

Basic commands are great when you're in a hurry, but they don't offer much in the way of precise command. Even when the quick way seems best, you may be better off using the Flight Orders MFD. You don't always need your whole squadron to pick that guy off your six or help you rescue that shuttle full of Bothan dignitaries.

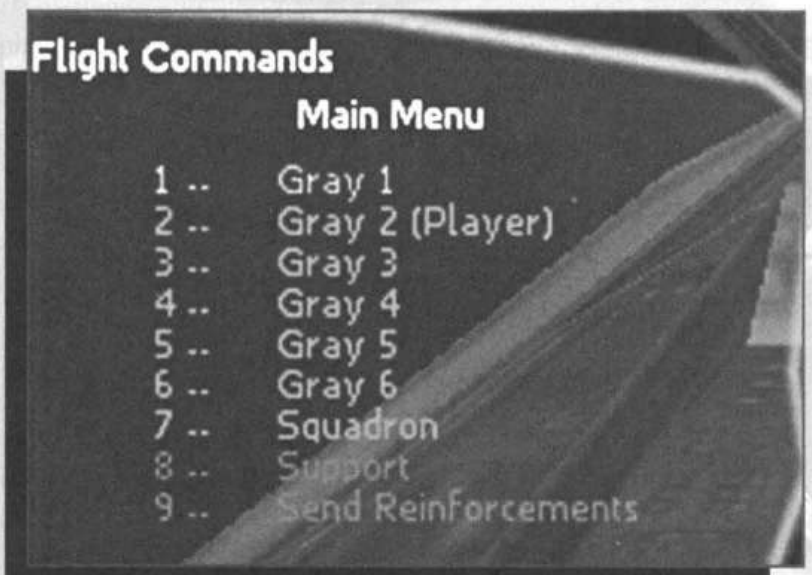


Fig. 3-1. The Flight Orders MFD

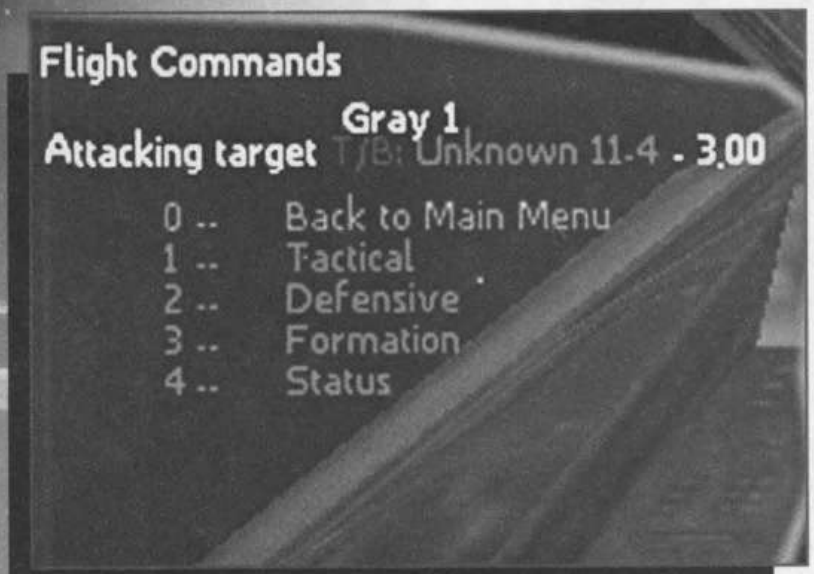


Fig. 3-2. The Four Order Categories

The Flight Orders MFD can be quickly accessed using Tab. At the top level is a list of the craft you can order. Press the craft's corresponding number in the MFD to bring up a list of four categories (not including Return to Main Menu, 0).

Only the numbers on the top row of your control keyboard will activate Flight Orders MFD options. Memorize, as much as you can, what each number key does at each level of the menu, or at least those you plan to use. You'll understand this the first time you go hunting for a command in the middle of a firefight.

Have one or two of your wingmates join your formation to cover you and help you out. Let the rest do their jobs. If you have two wingmates, consider whether you'd be better off going solo; otherwise, try not to let anyone fly alone. With only one wingmate to think about, you can save time in a tight spot by keeping that wingmate's number selected. Having to press only two keys instead of three in the heat of battle can save your life.

Tactical Orders

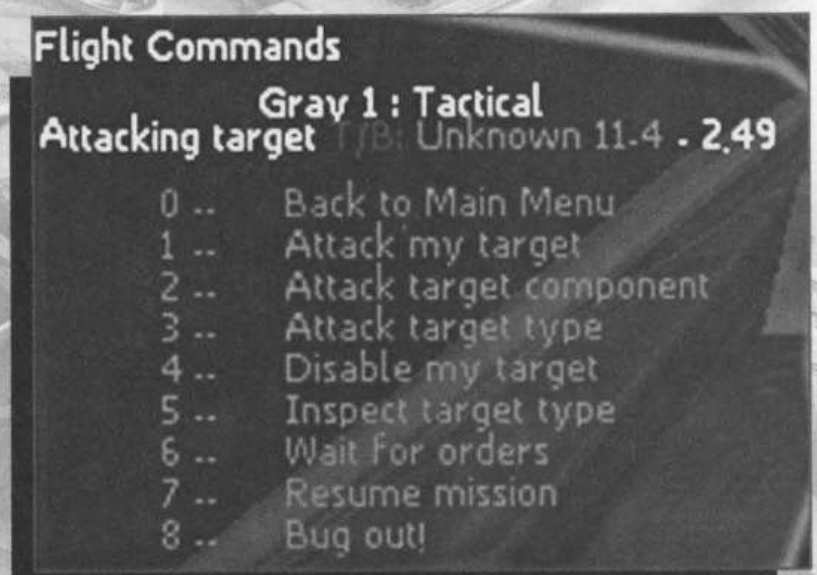

Flight Commands
Gray 1 : Tactical
Attacking target T/B: Unknown 11-4 . 2.49
0 .. Back to Main Menu
1 .. Attack my target
2 .. Attack target component
3 .. Attack target type
4 .. Disable my target
5 .. Inspect target type
6 .. Wait for orders
7 .. Resume mission
8 .. Bug out!

Fig. 3-3. The Tactical Submenu

Use the orders under the Tactical heading to have your wingmates accomplish offensive tasks. Here's a detailed breakdown of all tactical options.

Key	Function	Description
1	Attack my target	Using this with your whole squadron accomplishes the same thing as Shift A, with more key presses. Use this when ordering your wingmates one at a time.
2	Attack target component	Take out those shield generators! Cripple those engines! Better yet, get your squadron to do it for you.
3	Attack target type	This is wonderful for getting your wingmates to prioritize heavy strike craft.
4	Disable my target	This is useful even for craft without ion cannons, because they'll bring down the target's shields. After the shields are down, however, be sure to tell them to do something else, or they'll keep making passes at it until someone disables it.
5	Inspect target type	This is a great way to satisfy an inspection goal without having to think about it too much. Just be sure to check once in a while that the wingmate assigned to do this is still alive.
6	Wait for orders	All the warnings given for Shift W hold true for this.
7	Resume mission	This is great because you can activate your entire squadron at once, instead of having to target each pilot individually with Shift G.
8	Bug out!	This works much the same as Shift H and can't be canceled. Again, don't send someone home unless you're sure you won't need them, because you can't get them back.

Defensive Orders

The options under the Defensive heading are less frequently useful, but they serve well in certain situations.

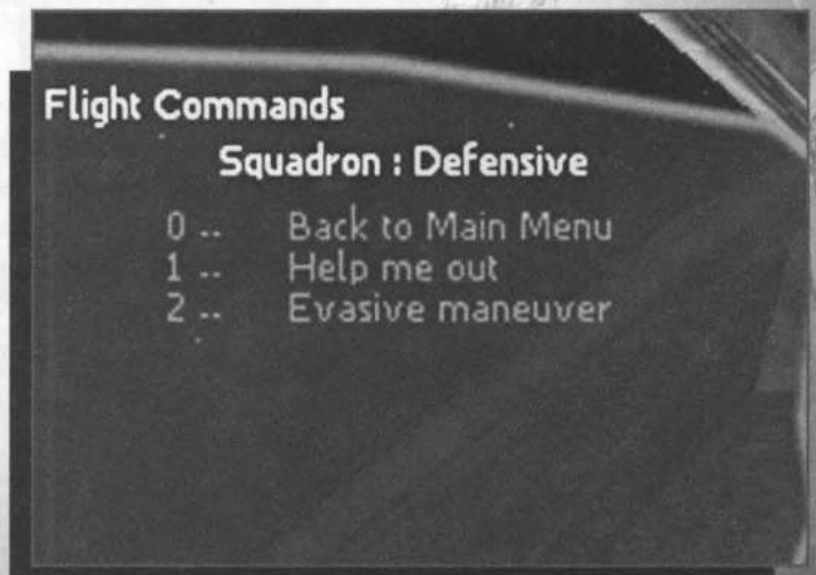


Fig. 3-4. The Defensive Submenu

Key	Function	Description
1	Help me out!	This does the same thing as Shift C, except that it's possible to order one wingmate at a time.
2	Evasive maneuver	This does the same thing as Shift E, with more key presses. It is useful, however, it would take more than three key presses to target the craft you want to order.

Formations and Other Orders

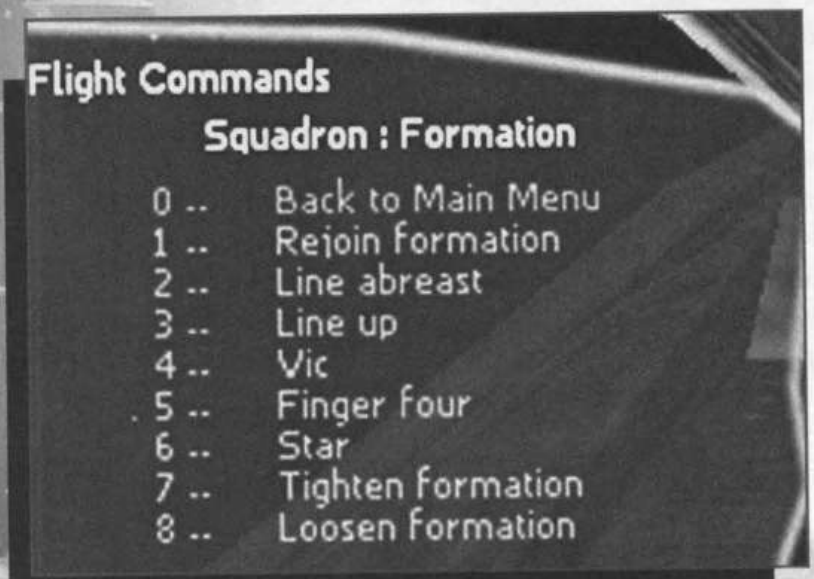


Fig. 3-5. The Formation Submenu

The most important thing to remember about the formation menu is that choosing any option on it will make the selected wingmate(s) follow you and do nothing else. This is surprisingly useful, especially if there's something you'd like to prevent your wingmates from doing, such as destroying a group of ships before you can inspect them. Use care, though: asking wingmates to follow you when they're in the middle of a dogfight can get them killed.

Individual formations are important only if you want to dictate the angle and spacing of your wingmates' attacks. This can make a difference in a head-on pass, but only if you have a reasonable cannon range advantage. This can happen when the faster Rebel craft face off against TIE bombers or assault gunboats. In this situation, choose a formation that roughly matches that of the incoming fighters and tell your squadron to attack that target type. Your squadron should already be in some sort of formation when you're trying to match the enemy's; otherwise, they won't assume the proper formation in time.

The remaining orders are useful under only limited circumstances. Report In will tell you only what you'd see as the craft's orders in the CMD; Get Reload is useful only when a reload craft is available. The Empire seems to use reload craft far more often than the Rebels do—probably because they can afford to lose a squadron's worth of warheads at once.

Beam Weapons

Invented by the Empire as part of Admiral Zaarin's weapons research program, starfighter-mounted beam weapons vastly increases any fleet's formidability. Even if the beam weapons themselves did nothing, the fact that they increase a craft's overall energy capacity by 50 percent would make them worthwhile.

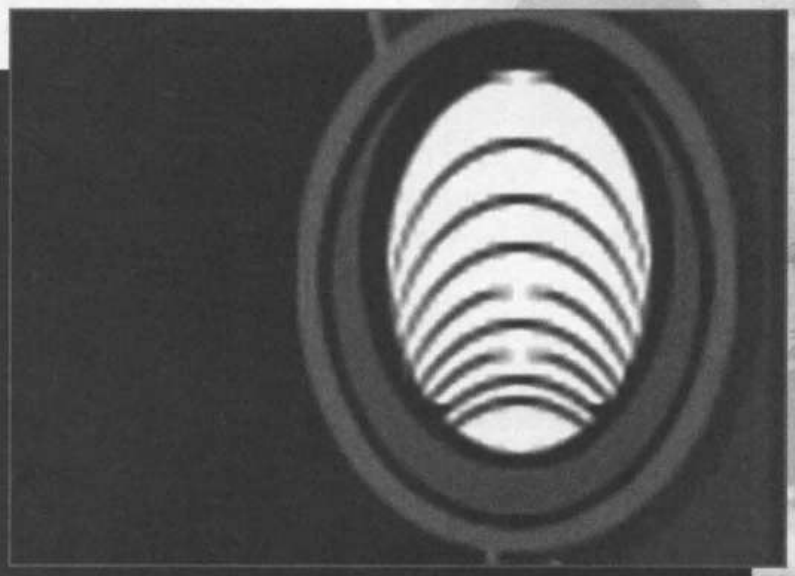


Fig. 3-6. The Beam Weapon Indicator

Tractor Beams

A vicious dogfighting tool, the tractor beam prevents the affected craft from turning. This is especially devastating against craft that rely on maneuverability to achieve victory, like the Rebel A-wing or the Imperial TIE interceptor.

The tractor beam makes the proton torpedo a viable antistarfighter weapon, as long as you *stay out of the blast radius*. It's quite satisfying to launch a heavy warhead at the middle craft of a squadron of unshielded craft. Tractor-beam it to be sure your little present arrives as intended, and watch the entire group of unsuspecting fighters go up in the blast. It's possible to pull this off without the tractor beam, but heavy warheads are easy to dodge.

The holofilm *Caught* shows a tractor beam in use.

Jamming Beams

The jamming beam can make taking on transport-class craft much less intimidating. Weapon systems on affected craft cease functioning while under the beam's influence. It won't shut down the turrets on a transport completely, but it will decrease the rate of fire substantially. Used en masse, jamming beams can even lock down a capital ship, but at that level you're probably better off using mag pulse.

Watch what the jamming beam does against an assault transport in the holofilm *Jammed*.

Decoy Beams

A craft armed with a decoy beam can be the terror of any engagement. An active decoy beam prevents your craft from being targeted or showing up on anyone's sensors. As far as all electronics are concerned, your craft doesn't exist. The only way to detect a decoyed craft is with the naked eye.

If you do spot a decoyed craft, you have something of an advantage for as long as you can keep it in sight. You can't target it, so its pilot will get no warning indicators when you start shooting. Being decoyed can make a pilot feel invulnerable, so take advantage of that by blindsiding decoyed ships whenever possible.

Countermeasures

A missile up your exhaust manifolds can ruin your day. With this in mind, the Rebel Alliance commissioned the design of countermeasure systems. Each available countermeasure system will thwart warheads with some degree of success, and perform some ancillary task, as well.

Chaff

Chaff dispensers generate an energy field that detonates warheads prematurely and disperses the resulting explosive force. Chaff protects only the rear of a craft, as mounting chaff dispensers anywhere else wreaks havoc with a craft's crucial sensor systems. As a bonus, chaff negates the effects of tractor beams and jamming beams.

Flares

Flares are actually a type of warhead designed to defeat other warheads. They prioritize enemy warheads, but if none are in range, they'll go after the nearest enemy fighter. To use flares as a countermeasure, make sure the warhead is headed toward the rear of your craft when you launch it, preferably straight behind you. Try to launch the flare when the warhead is about 1 km away. Flares can miss, so be ready to launch another if it does.

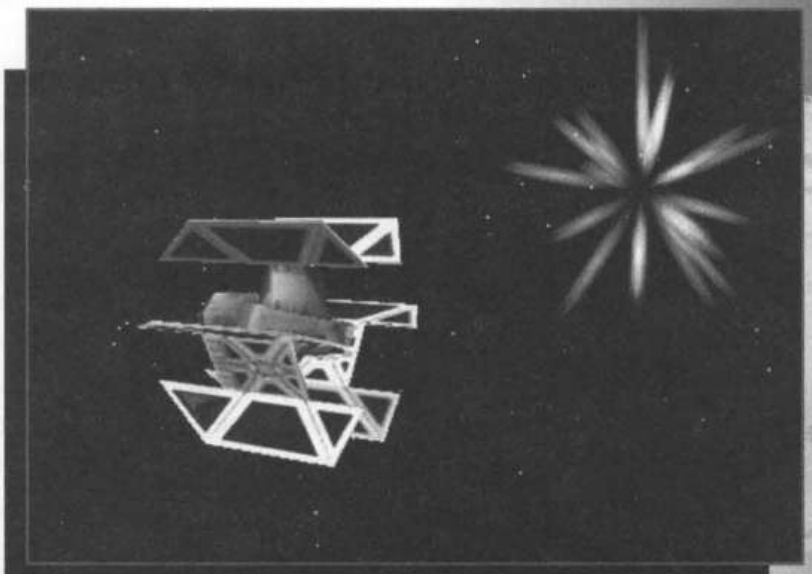
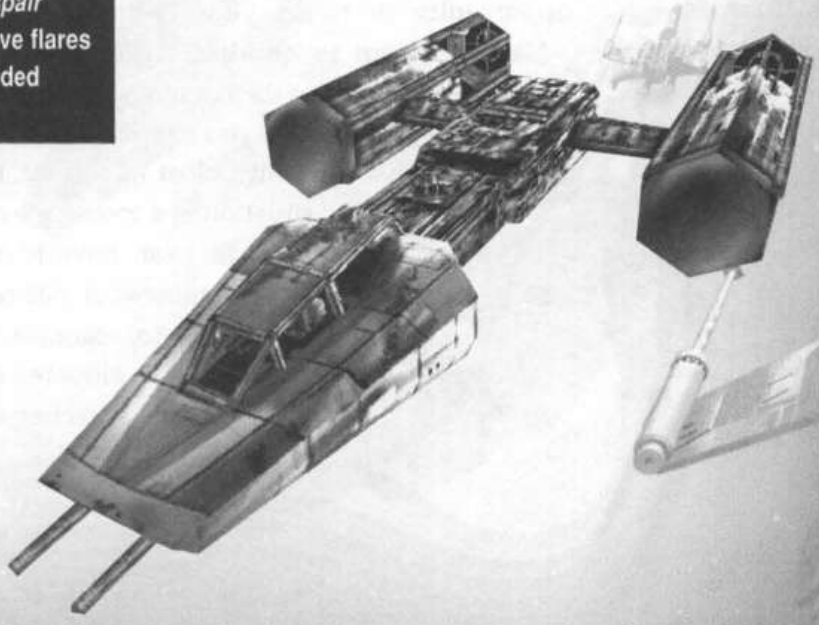


Fig. 3-7. Chaff Dispensers in Operation

The holofilm *Flare Despair* shows just how effective flares can be against unshielded craft.

Because flares target enemy craft, they're excellent equalizers in a close-up dogfight. Against shieldless craft, they can be devastating to the point of frustration.

Flares can be shot down just like other warheads, but there's usually far less reaction time. If you're following a craft armed with flares, be ready to react quickly.



Learning from the Film Room

The gun camera allows you to save a holofilm of the events it records (press Shift F to activate it). Viewing these films can give you insights into what you could have done better, especially if you were lucky enough to survive getting shot down. As you watch, follow some of the enemy craft. If your wingmates died, find out what killed them; maybe keeping them alive would have kept you in one piece. If your mission-critical craft was destroyed, find out why. If you're ever in that situation again, you'll be better prepared to prevent it.

Flying Efficiently

Just knowing what everything does isn't enough. The best pilots use their knowledge of energy management, situational awareness, and the subtleties of their weapons systems to squeeze every ounce of performance from their craft. Details differ from craft to craft and situation to situation, but the key to flying efficiently is to make sure you lose the least possible time and energy while achieving maximum effect.

Learn to switch energy configurations to fit the situation. Identify situations where speed and maneuverability aren't important. They give you the opportunity to pump your recharge rates to the maximum. Likewise, learn to prioritize speed. Be willing to turn off your lasers (dumping the remaining laser energy into your shields) to go as fast as you can without decreasing your destructive capability. Most important, be ready to adapt to a new situation at a moment's notice.

Certain craft have idiosyncrasies that make flying them somewhat different. The Corellian YT-1300 transport, for example, has two guns—one in a turret and one mounted fixed toward the front. Its heavy shields recharge slowly.

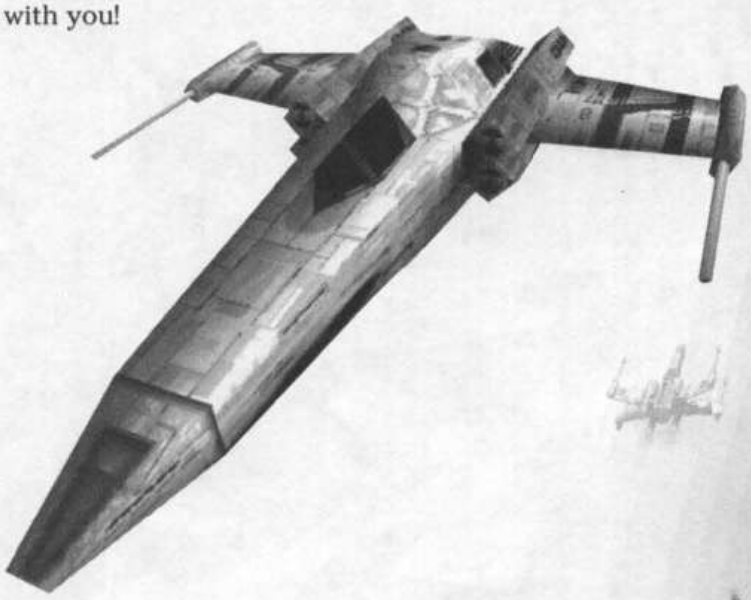
Flying this craft involves some trade-offs: turning the front laser off increases your speed significantly. Making yourself harder to hit this way is probably more useful than saving energy for the cannon; if you really need the second gun, you can transfer shield energy to it with little loss in shield integrity. In the long run, the shield energy you lose to your laser should be less than you would have lost moving at the slower speed, as long as you're not using the front gun continuously.

To fly efficiently, pay attention to the capabilities and peculiarities of each craft you pilot.

A Parting Shot

By now, you should be a fairly skilled pilot. Skills can always improve, however, especially in a highly competitive environment such as space combat. And as pilots devise useful tricks, new tricks will be created to counter them. Above all, learn from your mistakes. Nobody is perfect, but striving to become so will make you a better pilot.

May the Force be with you!



Part Two

A Path to Victory

The Azzameen family business, Twin Suns Transport Services, was never the same after the narrow escape from Hoth. Family patriarch Tomaas Azzameen was nearly killed during the escape.

I know. I was right there beside him.

I had just undergone some minor software and hardware adjustments when the Imperials attacked Hoth. Tomaas and Galin, the eldest son, grabbed what belongings and supplies they could and launched with the first wave. Fortunately, I was already onboard the transport when they took off. I am not insinuating they would have left me behind, but amidst confusion and chaos humans can make terrible mistakes.

Not long after the escape, Azzameen family headquarters began getting reports of pirate raids and hijackings. Shipping companies reported regular attacks by mercenaries and suffered heavy financial losses. A few went out of business.

Once I analyzed all the attack report data, I uncovered some interesting facts: the shipping companies that *did not* report losses were closely associated with the Empire. It does not take a dual-linked analyzer circuit to figure out what that means! At the top of the suspect list was Viraxo Industries. This shipping conglomerate had increased profits by 75 percent! Need I say more?

This fact did not elude the Azzameens, which is commendable. The Viraxos always have been connected to Azzameen problems in some way. It was common knowledge they had sworn to dominate the shipping lanes of the entire galaxy—no doubt with the Empire's help.

The Empire … my circuits overheat when I recall the horrible things attributed to them. The whole galaxy was enveloped in a tremendous struggle for survival and freedom from the grip of the Empire. Oh, it was a difficult and dangerous period, indeed.

Had it not been for this galactic turmoil, however, I might never have become associated with the youngest Azzameen sibling—Ace. After I was assigned to him, the real adventures began ….

Chapter 4
Family Business

The first seven missions always will be stored in a special cell of my memory bank. I am sure they were special to Ace, too, for they were his first opportunities to exhibit his piloting skills and contribute more to the family business. I know what it is like to be assigned menial maintenance tasks day after day, while others get the more adventurous duties.

Aeron contacted me electronically and said I was to accompany Ace on any missions assigned to him. You can imagine how excited I was to hear that. She also uploaded Corellian transport statistics and updated Azzameen trade routes. I already knew most of this, but the Azzameens had modified their ships, and this meant a few new calculations—nothing challenging for a droid of my caliber, but at least it was fresh data.

I was particularly pleased to find the laser turret gun functional. When I received operating instructions for the turret gun, as well as current combat tactics data and craft identification charts, I knew my existence as a mere maintenance droid was about to change.

Oh, yes—Ace's life was about to change, too.

The Combat Simulation

The following adventures have been faithfully reproduced for the combat simulator. Sidebars like this one, interspersed throughout Emkay's recollections, will guide you through Ace's adventures, outlining the actions necessary in each region.

Aeron's Lesson: Transport Operations

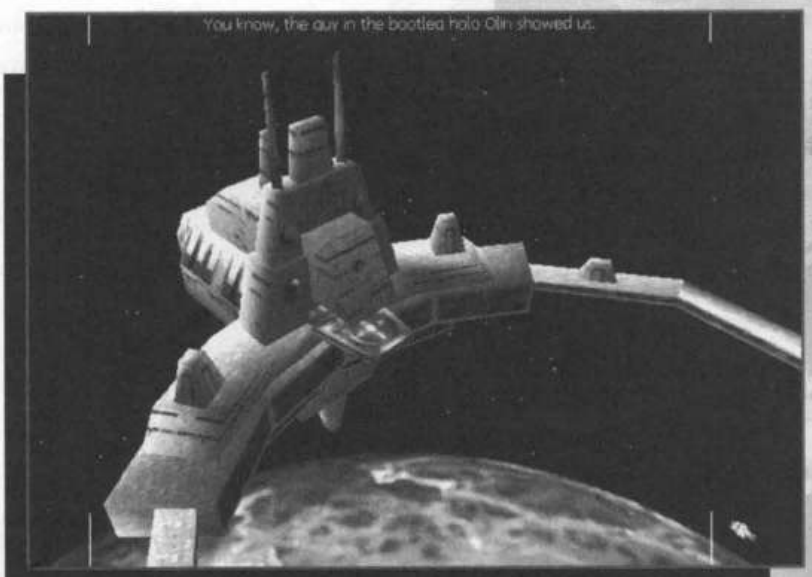


Fig. 4-1. Home, Sweet Home

I was not as nervous as Ace was on our first mission. Of course, this is understandable, considering he is human. But even burdened with that flaw, Ace showed a high degree of enthusiasm and confidence. I was proud to be his copilot.

Ace and I were in the *Sabra* and Aeron piloted the *Selu*, both Corellian YT-1300 transports. Fine ships.

We exited Azzameen Home Base in Aeron's wake and spotted the cargo canisters right in front of us. Ace pulled close to the canister on the left and made a perfect pick-up. Based on what I have learned of human expressions, it might very well have been "accidental." No matter, the job was done.

Aeron instructed us to target and head toward the nav buoy. We did so, following her, and when we were within .5 klicks of the buoy we hit the hyperdrive. It was my first time in hyperspace (Ace's, too), and, let me tell you, I almost blew a couple of excitement resistors.

When we came out of hyperspace, Harlequin Station loomed ahead. I was comforted by the presence of the SPC *Kouerd 1*, although I did not anticipate trouble.

Aeron, of course, started instructing Ace in how to dock and drop off the canister. With me as copilot, this was unnecessary, but I remained silent.

I do not wish to be critical of Ace, but his drop-off was not the most graceful I have observed. Damage to the canister was minimal, I am sure. No one else seemed to notice, so, again, I remained silent. Next, Aeron told us to retrieve the canister of fuel cells, CN/K Pi3, so we ID'd it and started our approach.

As we were about to make the pickup, Harlequin Station announced the arrival of two unidentified Pursuer Enforcement Ships (PES). Ace was so distracted he almost rammed the canister, but a quick, sharp bank saved us.

I targeted a Pursuer and we headed toward it to make the identification. I was pleased when Harlequin Station requested our assistance in persuading the intruders to leave the area. Ace went full-throttle toward the target, which told me it was time for action. I moved up to the turret gun.

As we closed on the first Pursuer, it opened fire on us. Ace swerved to avoid the laser blasts and we made the ID as we passed so close I could read the manufacturer's label. It was the PES *Enkidu*.

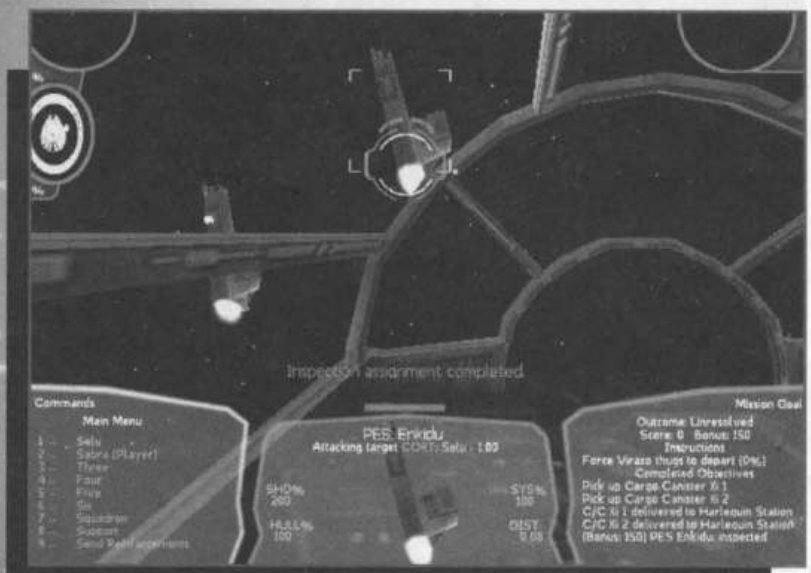


Fig. 4-2. A Foe for Life

Aeron chased the other vessel, so we ignored it, looped, and brought the *Enkidu* into our sights. Both Ace and I let loose with lasers and struck the target with solid hits. The *Enkidu*'s pilot must have been experienced, because he immediately throttled down and banked out of our sights.

Ace was not quite as quick with the throttle and we overshot the evasive target. This allowed the *Enkidu* to increase throttle and escape. Aeron told us to let them go—which baffles me to this day—and so we did. Into hyperspace they went.

Ace finally calmed down and we picked up the fuel cells canister as ordered. Harlequin Station thanked us for our help as we made the final pickups and headed toward the hyper buoy to home.

After arriving safely home, I noted a new expression on Ace's face—pride. I understood.

The Combat Simulation

This mission is extremely simple and allows for little variation in the way it's flown.

Azzameen Home Base

- Pick up CN Xi 2.
- Hyper to Harlequin Station.

Harlequin Station

- Drop off CN Xi 2 at Harlequin Station.
- Attack PES *Enkidu* and PES *Gilgam*. (Don't kill them.)
- Pick up CN/K Pi 3 (fuel cells) while Aeron picks up the coolant.
- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base.

Azzameen Home Base

- Drop off Pi 3 at Azzameen Home Base.
- Wait for Aeron to drop off coolant.
- Enter hangar or quit.

Emon's Lesson: Weapons

Ace's second mission sounded great the moment I was informed about it. Emon was to lead on this one, and as everyone at Azzameen Home Base knows, when Emon is along on a mission, you should keep your lasers charged.

We hypered out of the Azzameen Home Base sector. Emon piloted his personal Firespray *Andrasta* and Ace and I followed in the CORT *Sabra*. This time, though, we exited into a vacant sector, where Emon pulled ahead to drop off satellite drones for target practice. Some were labeled "Gold" and some "Red," but all were laser fodder.

This was Ace's first time in the laser turret gun position. I took over the piloting duties. Emon instructed me not to fire the frontal lasers: this was Ace's chance to blast things away. Disappointing.

I kept the *Sabra* fairly still as the first group of drones rushed our way. I saw the turret's lasers pierce the void and several times pass quite close to the targets. Ace had some combat simulator experience, but deflection shooting in the real universe is another story.

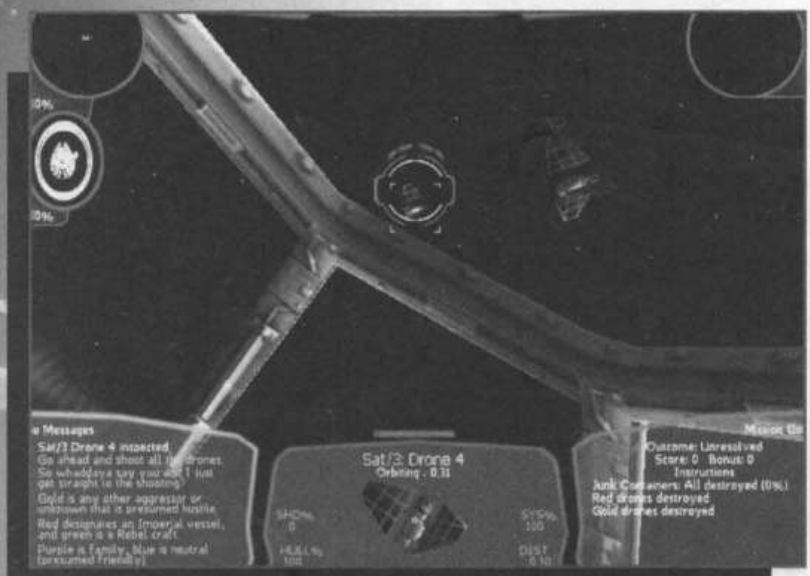


Fig. 4-3. A Target Drone

I maneuvered the *Sabra* around to allow Ace a better zone of fire as the drones began circling us. Ace was ready this time. I was pleased to see how quickly Ace adapted to the quirks of the turret gun. Three blasts, three drones down. Wonderful! Even Emon had to comment on that round.

The remaining drones met a similar fate, with only a few near-misses. This first round of practice was a success.

We then followed Emon's instructions and hypered to the next practice area. There we encountered a field of junk cargo canisters. Ace started blasting away with turret lasers immediately. In my opinion, this part of the practice session was far too easy. And you would think Emon and Ace would have saved one or two canisters for me, but Emon could not resist getting in there and destroying a few himself. Greed is such a human trait.

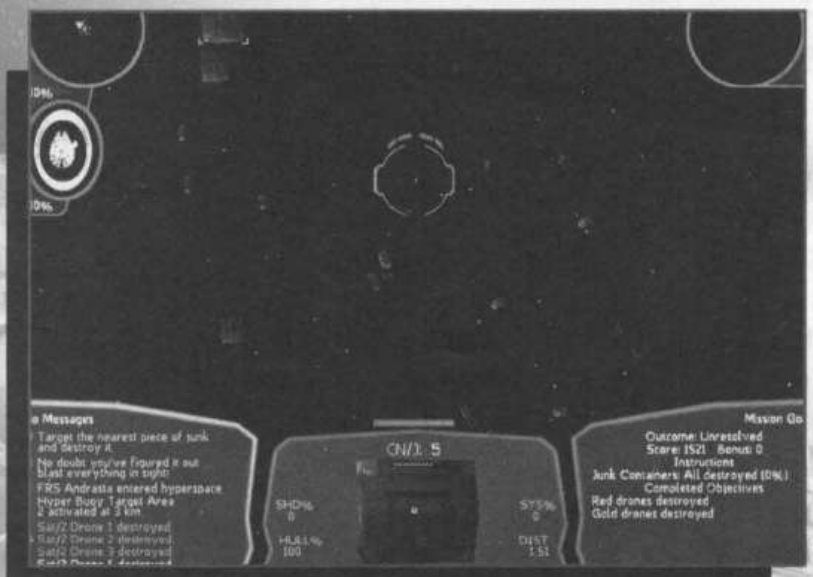


Fig. 4-4. Many Containers to Destroy

Ace and I followed Emon to the sector where Dunari's Casino was located. There Emon and Ace planned a celebratory drink. Of course, neither offered me anything. Typical.

Dunari's Casino has always had a dubious reputation. Factor in Emon's presence and the result can only be *trouble*. That day was no exception. Seemingly from nowhere, a PES and two Razor Fighters appeared in attack formation. I could feel the oil surging through my internal lubrication tubing. Ace was excited, too.

Emon, predictably, reacted aggressively and flew close enough to the Pursuer to ID it as the *Enkidu*. There was no communicating with Emon at this point; he was, as some Rebel pilots express it, *in*.

Ace instructed me to bank 45 degrees left and target the nearest Razor fighter. I easily deduced Ace's plan. This maneuver would give the laser turret gun a clear view of the other two ships, putting all three enemy ships in position for targeting. Splendid thinking, for a human!

Of course, Emon fired first. Emon and the *Enkidu* exchanged multiple laser blasts as they passed each other, but the *Enkidu* absorbed the most damaging hits. Only 2.677 seconds later, Ace targeted a Razor fighter and fired blasts as fast as the mechanisms would allow (.63433-second triggering), while I placed the *Sabra* on a collision course with the other Razor fighter. My shields were fully charged, so I had no intention of shooting it.

It was magnificent! Ace took out his Razor fighter in the first pass! The pilot of the Razor with which I collided didn't appear too happy as he drifted past the cockpit. Then Emon told me that collisions don't count as legitimate kills. I suspect he'd wanted the last Razor for himself.

The fight ended far too quickly. Ace fired the finishing blasts to *my* targeted Razor and Emon continued inflicting damage on the *Enkidu* right up until it hyperspaced out. Emon believed the *Enkidu* destroyed itself by engaging its hyperdrive. When I pointed out there was a 55 percent chance for survival in a Pursuer-class craft, Emon fired two laser blasts directly over my cockpit. I consider that sort of behavior extremely rude.

Fig. 4-5. A Familiar View

We never docked at Dunari's Casino, perhaps because we were ordered to leave. Instead, we headed back to Azzameen Home Base. The return was uneventful.

As a result of this mission, Ace was changing. He was becoming a true pilot.

The Combat Simulation

This is another straightforward mission, with virtually no possible tactical variations. You can't control the ship, and so you can do what you're told and little else.

Azzameen Home Base

- Hyper to Target Area 1.

Target Area 1

- Wait for Emon to launch drones.
- Destroy Drones 1 through 6.
- Hyper to Target Area 2.

Target Area 2

- Shoot all the containers. The closest will be targeted automatically.
- Hyper to Dunari's Casino.

Dunari's Casino

- Destroy the Razor fighters.
- Chase away the PES *Enkidu*.
- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base

Azzameen Home Base

- Enter hangar or quit.

Aeron's Error: Data Recovery

Aeron instructed me not to mention the event that necessitated this mission. Although her accidental trashing of vital security systems data is certainly noteworthy, I will avoid the subject and get right to the mission.

Again, Ace and I were in the *Sabra* and Aeron in the *Selu*. We had three cargo storage areas to inspect before returning to Azzameen Home Base, nothing unusual or risky.

In Cargo Area 1, Aeron told Ace to inspect the Type G cargo canisters while she inspected the Type I canisters. The canisters were arranged in rows to facilitate efficient inspection. Using a calculated flight path and systematic CMD targeting, the process can be completed quickly.

Ace, however, chose a different pattern, costing us an extra four minutes. I'm programmed with a high level of loyalty, and so I didn't say a word. Instead, I occupied myself with scanning the sector for intruders.

My scanning paid off in Cargo Area 2. As Ace flew slowly between the canister rows, I scanned ahead and uncovered a cargo ferry raider hovering in a docking position near a canister.

Ace increased throttle immediately and sped toward the intruder. Aeron hailed it but received no response. It was laser time!

The raider took evasive action, obviously intending escape. Aeron blocked off the raider's escape route and its abrupt change of direction allowed Ace and me a perfect opportunity to bring both front and turret lasers to bear. Seconds later, the raider was only stored data in my memory banks.

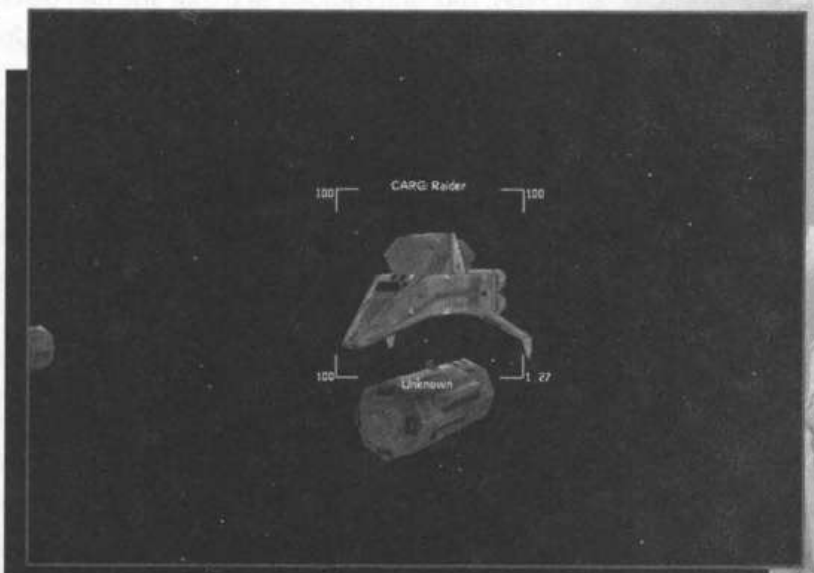


Fig. 4-6. An Unwelcome Guest

The third cargo area provided the most excitement. As we hypered into the area, Aeron alerted us of more intruders. Sure enough, two Razor fighters and a Pursuer were circling the canisters.

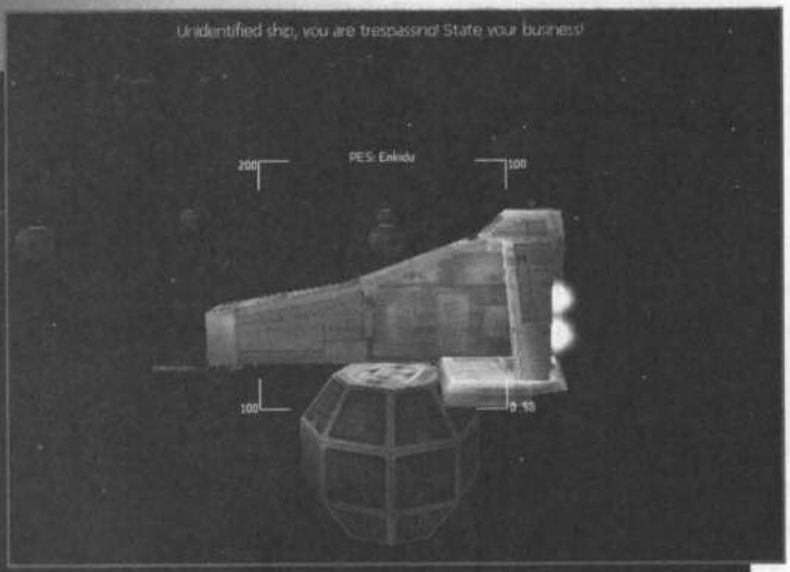


Fig. 4-7. The *Enkidu* tries to spice things up.

Aeron gave chase to the PES to get a solid ID and instructed Ace and me to keep the Razors occupied—music to my frequency sensors! I moved immediately to the turret gun.

The skirmish did not last long. We flew between the two Razors and banked sharply, putting one directly ahead of us and the other directly behind. My crippling laser hits sent the rear Razor spinning out of control, and Ace completely destroyed the other with a superbly accurate volley from the forward laser. What a team we made!

Ace turned to finish off the Razor I had disabled, but we could only watch helplessly as it spiraled into a cargo canister. It was still a kill I could rightfully claim, however.

Aeron had been busy, too. She radioed Ace that she had discovered a container of spice, an illegal substance the Azzameens never would have stored knowingly. Upon my suggestion, we picked up the canister of spice to take it back to Azzameen Home Base. What to do with it could be decided there. It was risky carrying spice back to home base, but it was riskier leaving it in an Azzameen storage area where Imperial inspectors could find it.

On the way home, Aeron told us she had ID'd the Pursuer craft as the *Enkidu* before it escaped. That ship's name was beginning to have a very negative effect on the Azzameens. As Emon later commented, "Payback time for the *Enkidu* is just around the corner." I did not know what corner he was referring to.

The Combat Simulation

If it seems to take a long time to inspect all the containers, try this: Approach the containers so you can fly from the end of one container field to the end of the other. Fly between the outermost row and the next one in, hitting ◎ as you go. When you reach the end of the row, turn and fly between the remaining two rows of uninspected containers, inspecting them the same way.

Azzameen Home Base

- Hyper to Cargo Area 1.

Cargo Area 1

- Inspect all CN/G.
- Help Aeron inspect any remaining CN/I.
- Hyper to Cargo Area 2.

Cargo Area 2

- Destroy cargo ferry raider.
- Inspect all pressure tanks.
- Help Aeron inspect any remaining containers.
- Hyper to Cargo Area 3.

Cargo Area 3

- Destroy both Razor fighters.
- Chase away the PES *Enkidu*—again.
- Inspect the CN/Ls (spheres).
- Help Aeron inspect any remaining containers.
- Wait for Aeron to pick up spice.
- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base.

Azzameen Home Base

- Enter hangar or quit.

Sticking it to the Viraxos: Covert Delivery

I soon learned what the Azzameens would do with the container of illegal spice discovered in Cargo Area 3. Because Tomaas and Galin were still away on business, Ace's uncle, Antan, devised a plan to return the contraband covertly to the Viraxo facility at Denbo.

Aeron equipped the *Selu* with an erroneous ID transponder. Masquerading as one of the Viraxo's regular supply ships, the *Venix*, she was assigned to drop off the container while Ace and Emon caused a diversion. The diversion would cover her entry and exit—and trigger an Imperial response. Brilliant! The Imperials would find the spice at the Viraxo site, and that would be hard for the Viraxo to explain.

The plan required precise timing. Had the Azzameens left it up to me, the mission would have proceeded flawlessly—droid hindsight, yes, but I have complete confidence in my calculations.

Anyway, the *human* error that threw the whole plan out of sync was Emon's and Ace's premature arrival at Denbo. As expected, laser fire from Emon's Firespray immediately filled the area. Ace and I followed Emon into the fray with the trusty *Sabra*.

From the laser turret gun position, I counted six Razor fighters involved in the ensuing furball. Emon radioed that he had identified the Pursuer *Enkidu*, so I assumed Ace and I were on our own with the Razors. Of the Azzameen siblings, Emon is the least adept at multitasking.

Aeron's voice crackled over the radio: we had arrived too soon. I masterfully kept Ace's flank clear of Razor fighters as I radioed assurance to Aeron.

Ace was in top form, I must say. He already had dispatched two Razors and severely damaged another when Aeron's call for emergency pickup came through. We were too involved with the Razor fighters to answer, but Emon responded and sped past us toward the Denbo facility docking area toward Aeron.

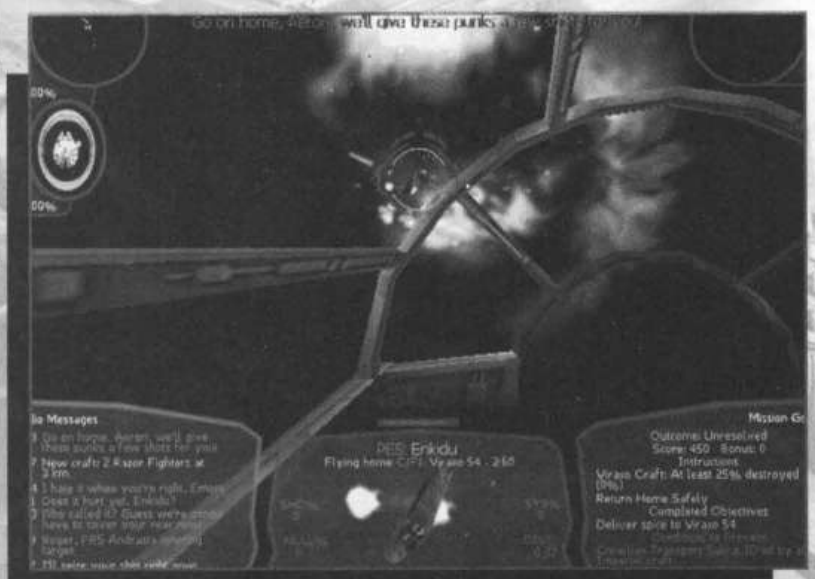


Fig. 4-8. No wonder he ran all the time.

It was up to Ace and me to keep the enemy fighters busy during the rescue. By the time Emon picked up Aeron, Ace had eliminated all but one Razor fighter—and it was sparking like a busy repair droid. I noted that only seconds remained before Imperial forces were due to arrive, but Ace continued his pursuit of the last Razor.

Two more Razor fighters exited the Denbo facility as Emon ordered us to follow him into hyperspace. Emon's Firespray blinked off the CMD while we were still 4.66 klicks from the hyperpoint. Ace had the discipline to disengage and follow Emon's orders, tempting as it was to hang around to finish off the damaged Razor.

I was distraught that Ace felt the need to destroy the *Venix* on the way out, but at least he was quick about it. It was a good thing, too, because as we got within 1.2 klicks of the entry point, a *Victory*-class Star Destroyer appeared on the grid. There was not even time to wave good-bye.

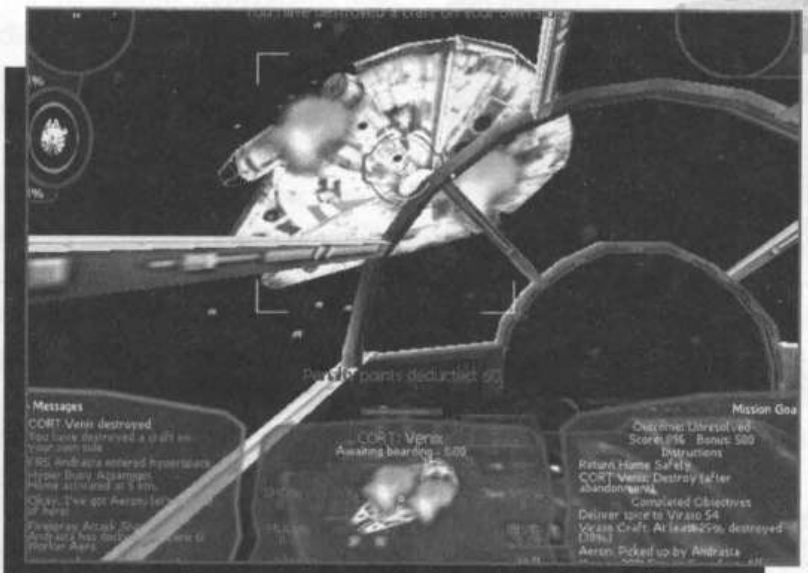


Fig. 4-9. Alas, poor *Venix*.

Emon and Aeron were lining up to dock when Ace and I entered the Azzameen Home Base sector. Emon complained that he had had only one chance to destroy the *Enkidu*. This was not logical, but I refrained from commenting. I did, however, mention Ace's five confirmed kills and my indispensable assistance.

It was a cheerful day at the Azzameen Home Base.

The Combat Simulation

This is the first mission with any sort of complexity, but it's still very straightforward. The *Venix* gets disabled, whether or not you stop the Razor fighters, so it's mainly a question of staying alive.

Azzameen Home Base

- Hyper to Viraxo 54.

Viraxo 54

- Destroy the first four Razor fighters.
- Destroy the *Enkidu*.
- Destroy the remaining Razor fighters.
- Trash as much of the base as you can before the Imperials show up.
- Destroy the *Venix* on your way out.
- Don't let the Imperials get within 1 km of you.
- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base.

Azzameen Home Base

- Enter hangar or quit.

Black Market Bacta: Cargo Transfer

When Tomaas briefed us on this mission, I almost blew a capacitor: the Azzameens were to help the Rebel Alliance! Emon, Aeron, Ace, and I would fly escort for Tomaas and Galin on a secret pick-up of bacta for the Rebels.

Ace and I were assigned the *Sabra* and Emon, as usual, piloted the *Andrasta*. Aeron was the lucky one, with Tomaas's YT-2000, the *Otana*. We would cover Tomaas and Galin, in the *Vasudra*, as they transferred the bacta from the smuggler vessel.

Ace and I were thrilled to have the opportunity to help the Alliance in their struggle against the Empire. I was not thrilled at the prospect of meeting a smuggler craft at Saruwen Station to get the transfer location's coordinates. Smugglers are notorious for reneging on their agreements. But I was a mere droid, so no one listened to me.

We all exited hyperspace within milliseconds of each other. The SCT *Ravenno*, the smuggler vessel we were supposed to rendezvous with, awaited us at Saruwen Station. I scanned the area for suspicious craft, but none registered. The Azzameens seemed confident. After a brief communication with the *Ravenno*, the *Vasudra* began receiving coordinates for the cargo transfer.

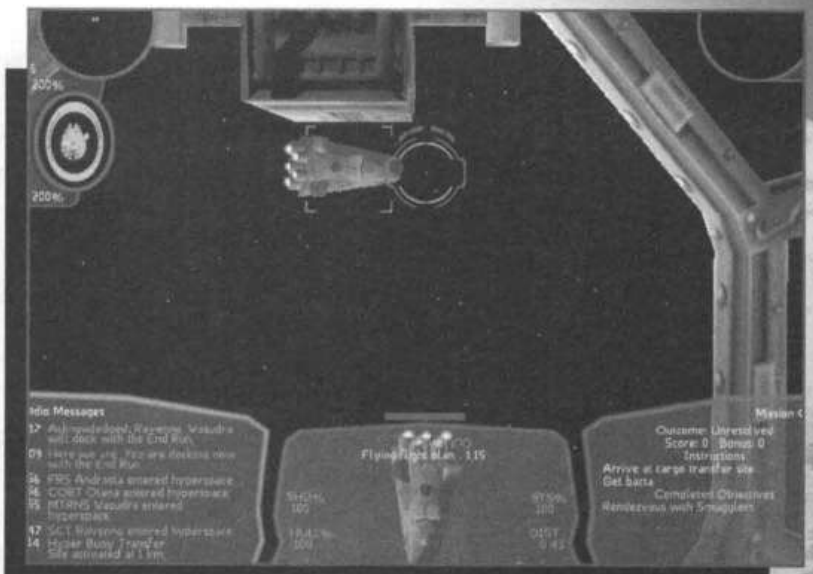


Fig. 4-10. Keeping a Close Eye on SCT *Ravenno*

We were to follow the *Ravenno* into hyperspace using the transmitted coordinates. I noticed that Ace kept the *Ravenno* targeted on the CMD and his front laser sights charged the entire time. If I did not know better, I would have thought Ace was part droid.

We exited hyperspace into a desolate sector. The coded coordinates the *Ravenno* had transmitted to us autoerased upon arrival.

Awaiting us was a Xiytar transport, soon ID'd as the *End Run*. Following brief communications with this vessel, Tomaas and Galin docked with it and began pumping the bacta into the *Vasudra*. Meantime, Emon and Aeron patrolled the sector, prepared for intrusions.

Soon the *End Run* radioed it was having problems with the pumps, and the *Vasudra* should stand by—a disturbing proposal. Aeron, especially, was alarmed by this, and at once began slicing into their computer systems. Quick thinking, for a human.

Two Zero G technicians exited the Xiytar craft, supposedly to make the repairs. Aeron noticed the techs were heading for the *Vasudra*'s *engines*, not the pumps. It was a setup!

Sure enough, a Corellian gunship hypered into the sector, escorted by a pair of CloakShape fighters. To my surprise, the gunship fired first, not Emon. He quickly followed suit, joining Aeron to attack the gunship (identified as the *Loose Cannon*). Ace was told to take out the Zero G technicians. My name was not mentioned, so I felt at liberty to target the CloakShape fighters and did so.

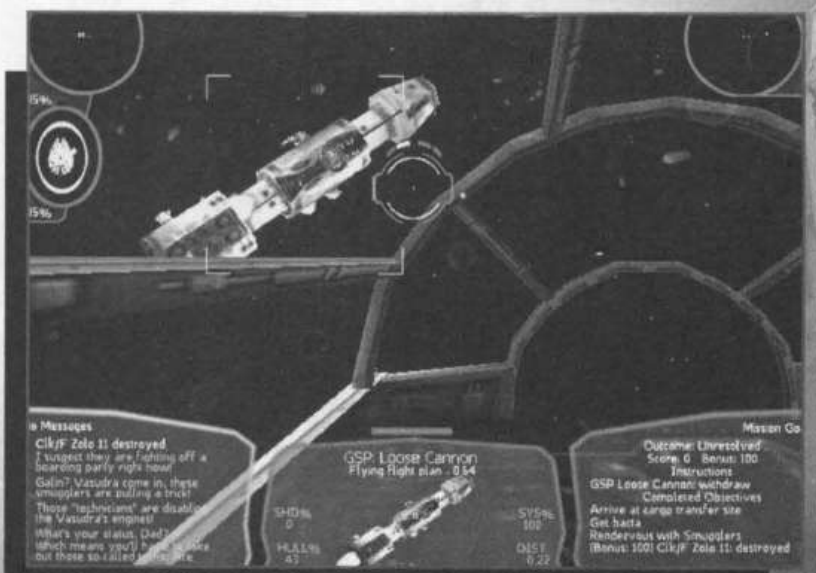


Fig. 4-11. The *Loose Cannon* is not your friend.

Ace dispatched the Zero Gs with a few well-executed laser blasts, while I kept the CloakShapes at bay until Ace was ready to turn and engage them. When he did, their fate was assured: they were history.

As the last CloakShape fighter exploded into debris, I noted the Corellian gunship bursting internally. Seconds later, it, too, was nothing more than space debris.

We all converged on the *End Run* to deliver a coordinated final blow, but before we could pull within laser range, Tomaas ordered us to let the Xiytar ship escape. Emon, clearly upset at the damage to his Firespray from the gunship, radioed a series of colorful expressions everyone pretended not to hear.

Tomaas exhibited commendable restraint with his decision to let the *End Run* escape. In this case, however, I must side with Emon. As Emon so delicately expressed it: "We should have toasted them!"

Perhaps another day.

The Combat Simulation

This is your first mission facing a capital ship. The Corellian gunship is vicious against starfighters, but your turret should make it an easy kill. The scout ship *Ravenno* can do some damage, so it is a good idea to make it your first target.

Azzameen Home Base

- Hyper to Saruwen Station.

Saruwen Station

- Follow SCT *Ravenno* to transfer site.

Transfer Site

- Target SCT *Ravenno*, go to turret, and engage autopilot ([F]).
- When SCT *Ravenno* reveals itself to be hostile, destroy it from the turret.
- Destroy the GSP *Loose Cannon* from the turret.
- Mop up by hitting [R] and destroying the nearest target until all targets are gone.
- Hyper to Saruwen Station.

Saruwen Station

- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base or quit.

Azzameen Home Base

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rebel Rendezvous: Aid the Alliance

Had the Azzameens foreseen this mission's results, they never would have committed themselves. I, of course, was well aware of all the possibilities, but I was not allowed to voice those that negatively represented the odds for survival. It was a completely illogical (human) response perpetrated by the famous Han Solo: *"Never tell me the odds."*

What did they purchase me for?

The mission started out on a positive note, however. Ace and I were assigned to the *Otana*—the one ship in the Azzameen fleet I looked forward to piloting. We were to join Emon and escort the *Vasudra* to rendezvous with the Rebels. Tomaas and Galin, piloting the *Vasudra*, planned to deliver a supply of bacta to them for their fight against the Empire.

We left Azzameen Home Base in tight formation and hypered to a deep-space colony at Brintwo. There we met with Olin Garn. He piloted a Rebel X-wing fighter. There was no doubt now which side of the galactic struggle the Azzameens were on. I was in 100 percent agreement. I was well-informed of the horrible droid abuse occurring regularly under the Empire's rule. Not to suggest that *any* human hand is squeaky clean on this subject, but that is another story.

We followed Olin via a second hyperpoint to a secret Rebel hospital (a Platform Type 2 structure). A variety of Rebel vessels were there—freighters, transports, corvettes, frigates, and light cruisers, to name a few. We were deep in Rebel territory, now.

Trouble began almost immediately. As Emon put it, "We're in deep space without a thruster now."

The Imperial II Star Destroyer *Corrupter*, backed up by two *Lancer*-class frigates, entered the sector. Their sudden appearance did not go over well with the Rebel forces present. There were even a few radio messages casting suspicion on the Azzameens. But there was no time to argue: it was combat mode for this droid!

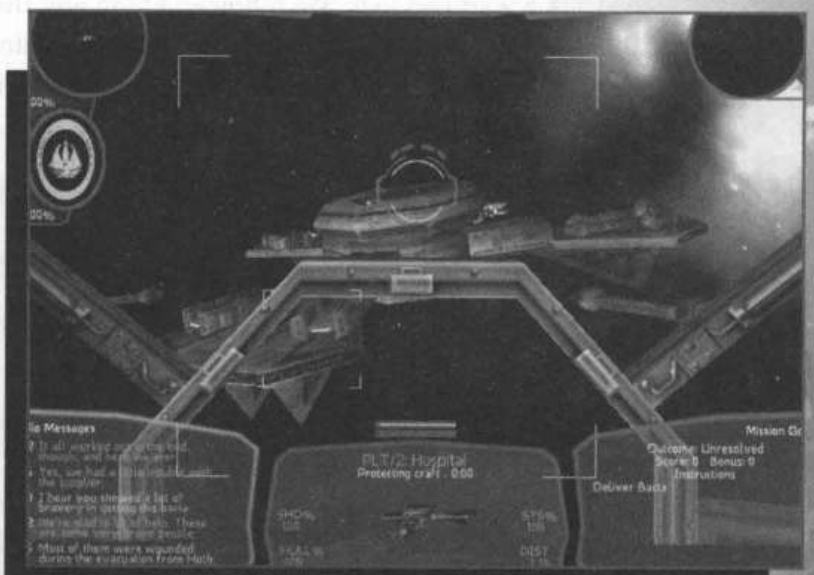


Fig. 4-12. The Rebel Hospital Base

We were ordered to join the Rebel fighter screen to protect the friendly ships as they prepared to evacuate people from the hospital platform. Tomaas and Galin needed time, too, to transfer the bacta to a Rebel ship. The *Corrupter* had launched TIE fighters and bombers, and I think even the humans recognized the unfavorable odds. This was too much Imperial firepower to defeat. It would not be pretty.

I had never witnessed combat of this magnitude, nor had I holofilms of such situations in my memory banks. The influx of data was tremendous. Radio messages jammed the communications system. Calls for help, cheers for minor victories, and reports of destroyed craft poured in.

Ace and I had destroyed four TIE fighters when Imperial assault transports and TIE bombers appeared on our CMD, heading straight for the hospital—and the docked *Vasudra*. Ace disengaged a crippled TIE fighter and maneuvered to intercept them. Emon was unavailable, so it was just Ace and me against two ATRs, two TIE bombers, and three TIE fighters. Those odds were fine with him, Ace said, and then he fired his forward lasers at the closest target, an ATR. It was a wise selection; I was sure the Imperials preferred capturing the bacta to destroying it.

We were unable to stop the other ATR before it could open fire on the vulnerable *Vasudra*. There was nothing we could do; the *Vasudra* took far too many hits and came to an abrupt stop. It was hopelessly disabled.

Suddenly, the hospital platform erupted in a series of horrific explosions. Considering its proximity to the *Vasudra*, we were forced to evade. The shock waves shook our YT-2000 and my sensors registered a sudden increase in temperature. It was a close one.

Emon instructed us to evacuate the sector immediately: four assault gunboats had arrived and were trying to attain a warhead lock. We followed Emon and the surviving Rebel ships into hyperspace, but on different coordinates. Ace and I had destroyed nine TIE fighters, one ATR (Ace struck the ATR as it docked to board the *Vasudra*—a superb demonstration of gunnery skills), and 10 TIE bombers. Still, it did not feel like a victory.

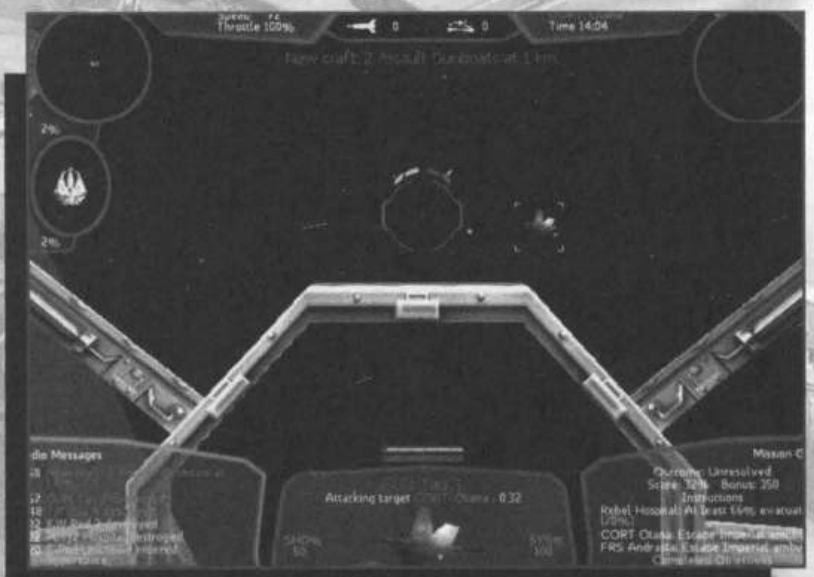


Fig. 4-13. For the average pilot, the gunboats' arrival means it is time to leave.

There was an uncharacteristic silence after we arrived at Azzameen Home Base. Tomaas and Galin Azzameen did not return. It was not known whether they had died in battle or been captured by the Imperials. Either way, it was a devastating loss.

The Combat Simulation

The important thing to remember in this mission is not to rush things. You can win the mission if you jump the gun, but that's doing it the hard way. Don't head toward the *Corrupter* and the *Lancer*-class frigates until after you're asked to join the fighter screen. Unless you wait, the fighting gets very heavy very quickly, and you're likely to lose too many Rebel ships.

Prioritize the bombers. Remember, it's faster to disable them than it is to destroy them. It wouldn't hurt to have Emon attack that target type.

The assault gunboats' arrival is your signal to leave. Defeating them takes amazing skill: you must dodge madly while using [E] to determine which gunboats are attempting a lock. Break the lock by passing them or by using [F] to get them to veer off (preferably both). It's vital you don't get hit by a missile; the time you spend spinning out of control will earn you many more in rapid succession. It's possible—but not probable—to survive one such barrage if you were near maximum shields when it happened. If you manage to defeat the gunboats, you can get the ISDII and the assault transports.

Azzameen Home Base

- Hyper to Brint-wo Colony.

Brint-wo Colony

- Hyper to the Rebel hospital platform.

Rebel Hospital

- Wait to be told to join the fighter screen.
- Protect the escaping Rebel craft by stopping the TIE bombers.
- When the assault gunboats show up, hyper to Brint-wo Colony.

OR

- Take out the gunboats, then the ISD, then anything that might be left, and hyper to Brint-wo Colony. Good luck.

Brint-wo Colony

- Hyper to Azzameen Home Base or quit.

Azzameen Home Base

- Return to family base or quit.

Nowhere to Go: Escape Imperial Attack

When it was announced the Empire had issued warrants for all Azzameen family members (I include myself), I was not surprised. We had cost them plenty of TIE fighters, I am proud to say.

Antan issued orders to prepare for possible evacuation of Azzameen facilities. He would take his M/AT *Big Score*, and, along with Emon in the FRS *Andrasta*, would retrieve valuable materials from the Azzameen cargo facilities. Meanwhile, Ace and I (again in the *Otana*) would accompany Aeron's CORT *Sabra* to the Twin Suns Station repair facility. Aeron was to pick up some family treasures within the facility; Ace was to collect a cargo container of warheads.

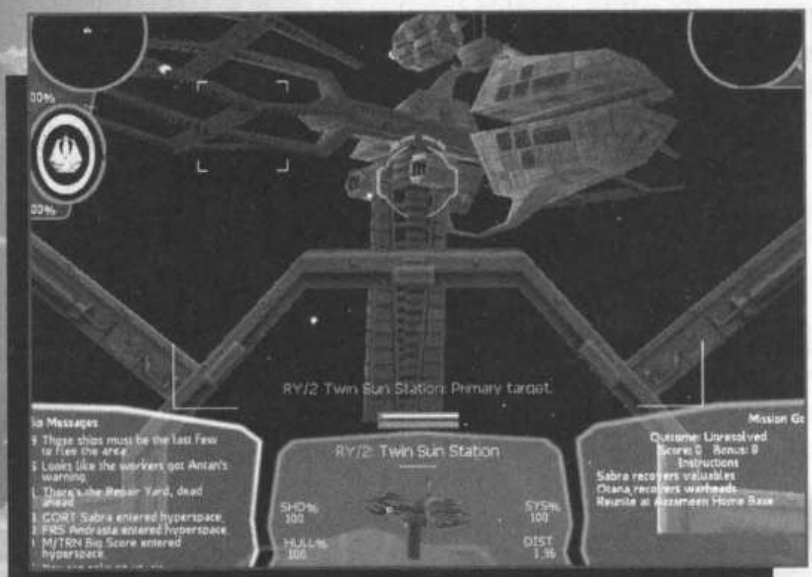


Fig. 4-14. Twin Suns Station

These warheads were of utmost importance to the Alliance, not to mention a tidy profit in the exchange for the Azzameens. Antan's mercenary attitude toward the Rebellion was unpopular among the Azzameen siblings, and his personality could be abrasive, but he had a good mind for business.

Everything went fine at the repair facility—for the first 20 seconds. Ace maneuvered the *Otana* in front of the docking bay where the warheads container awaited us and entered slowly. Fortunately, I had been scanning the sector repeatedly and could announce the presence of a large group of Imperial and Viraxo ships the moment it appeared.

As expected, the *Victory*-class Star Destroyer immediately released a group of TIE fighters. This did not inspire Aeron with confidence. She needed more time to complete her tasks. It was up to Ace and me both to pick up the warheads *and* to engage the TIEs.

To make matters worse, I noticed the Viraxo corvette (identified now as the CRV *Blast Radius*) was moving into attack position, and the CMD registered incoming landing craft and Razor fighters. The latter, I knew, were Viraxo ships.

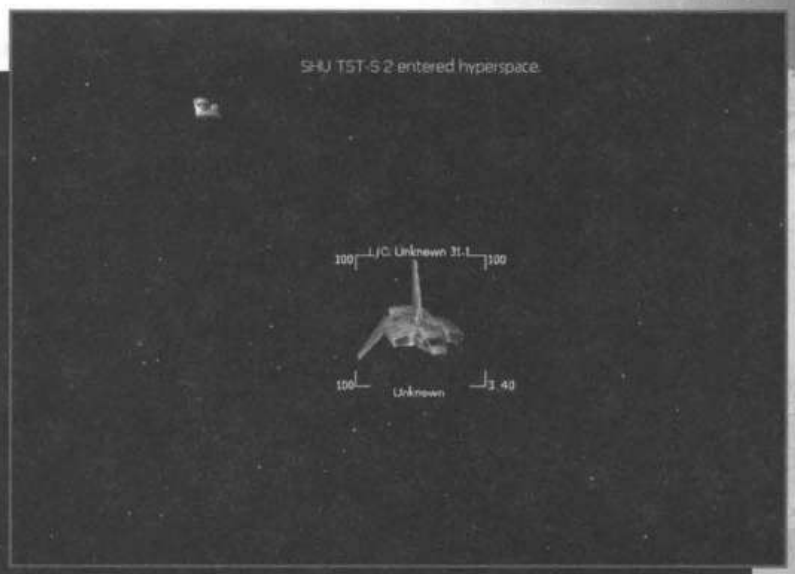


Fig. 4-15. Viraxo landing craft prepare to capture Twin Suns Station.

Ace increased shield and laser energy levels and targeted the nearest TIE fighter. Two quick laser blasts and that TIE disappeared from the CMD screen. Ace's quick maneuvering allowed us to avoid the wreckage and any damage it might have done to the attached warheads container.

Aeron had finished by then and radioed for us to follow her to the hyper buoy and back to Azzameen Home Base. I like a good fight as much as any pilot, but I confirmed that this was a wise choice. I believe Ace was about to make an alternative suggestion—along the lines of *dicta Emon*—when a solid hit from the corvette's ion cannons shook the *Otana*. Ace changed his mind.

Emon was patrolling the sector when we arrived. A number of transports and freighters filled with Azzameen employees and supplies were preparing to exit the sector. Then Emon shocked us all by announcing that Imperials had captured Antan's ship at a cargo facility. There was a sudden communal understanding that the Azzameen family was in more than just deep space with the Empire.

Ace reported the warheads were unscathed. I pointed out that the report easily could have been more negative, and that it would have been wiser to fight unencumbered and reacquire the warheads on the way out. I started to add that the *Otana* had suffered 50 percent shield damage, but Ace rudely disabled my external communications circuits. I was within my rights to voice my displeasure with this, and barely had begun to do so, when Ace disabled my *internal* communications circuits. I made a silent notation in my Droid Abuse diary.

Just then, a small force of Viraxo fighters entered our sector. That they sent so few craft indicated they thought the Azzameen family would have been long gone by then. Ace and Aeron seemed all too happy to prove them wrong. Emon arrived soon after the last Razor fighter was blasted to space dust. The three Azzameen siblings discussed their next move. Ace didn't see fit to reactivate my communications system, so I was limited to passive participation.

Because the last few Azzameen plans did not execute as expected, I was pleased to realize that they had no time to make another one: an Imperial Star Destroyer entered the sector, come to take Azzameen Home Base.

The employee ships entered hyperspace without hesitation. Emon, Aeron, and Ace all turned toward the hyper buoy to follow suit. Ace reactivated my communications circuits and I immediately announced the presence of multiple groups of TIE fighters, interceptors, and bombers on an intercept course. Off went my communications systems again. *Really!*

The Azzameens flew into the center of the swarm of Imperial fighters, blazing away. Perhaps the pressures of the Empire–Azzameen–Rebel–Viraxo situation had pushed them over the edge, but what other choice did we have?

We all exited hyperspace into a secure Rebel sector and heaved a unanimous sigh of relief. All our vessels displayed heavy damage. Sparks and debris trailed us as we approached the CRS *Defiance* for docking. The warheads container suffered minor external damage.

It was good to be out of immediate danger, and the *Defiance* was kind enough to offer us docking space. But it was not *home*.

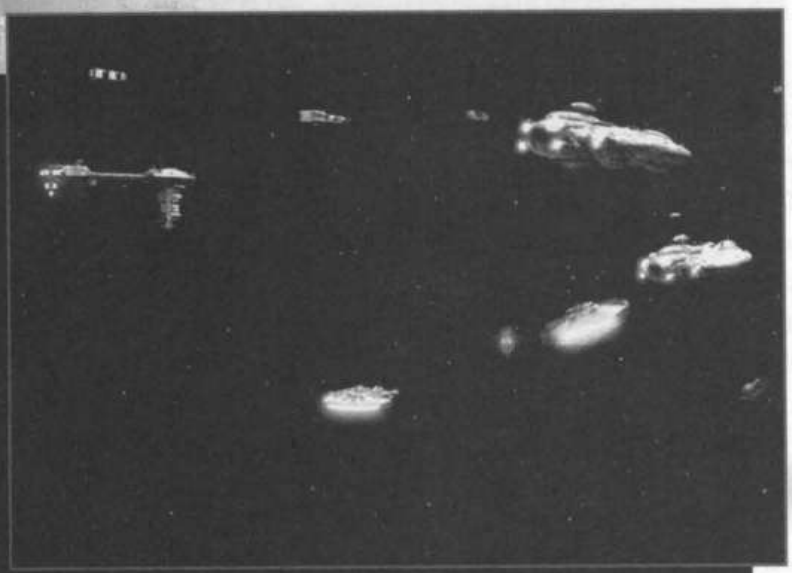


Fig. 4-16. The Rebel Fleet

The Combat Simulation

This mission affords the opportunity for intense combat. Diligent effort can thwart the Imperial–Viraxo attack on Twin Suns Station. Before the enemy arrives, place the container of warheads in a safe but accessible spot—between the upper and lower halves of the repair yard, for example. You need to be able to dock with it unmolested if the fighting gets too rough and forces you to make a run for it. Don't leave it behind: you won't be able to hyper back for it.

Destroy the landing craft first. They fire heavy rockets at the station and then disable it. The automatic turret is fantastic for killing TIE fighters as they pass within .3 km; hitting [R] and then [F] a lot will keep them from overwhelming you. Remember to use countermeasures to stop the torpedoes you haven't time to dodge or shoot. Once the fighters are gone, jump to the turret and take out the *Blast Radius* and the *Furious*.

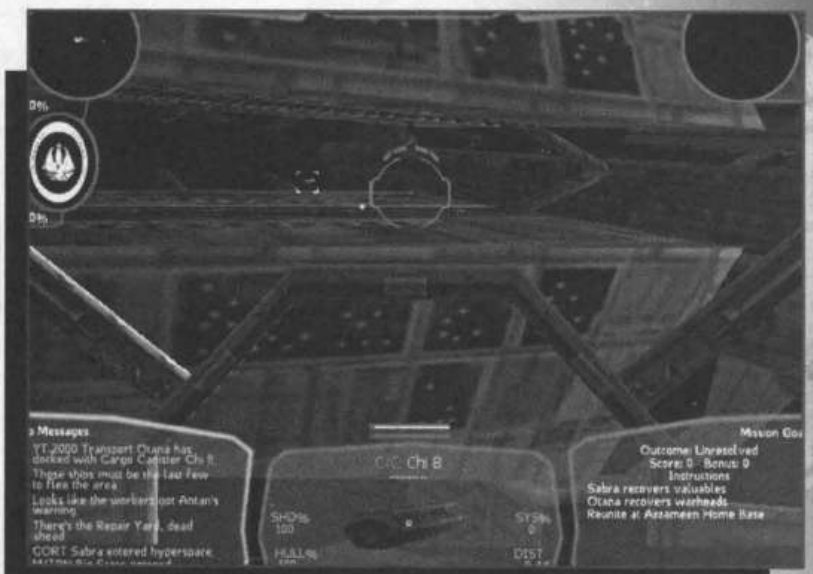


Fig. 4-17. A Safe Spot

Azzameen Home Base

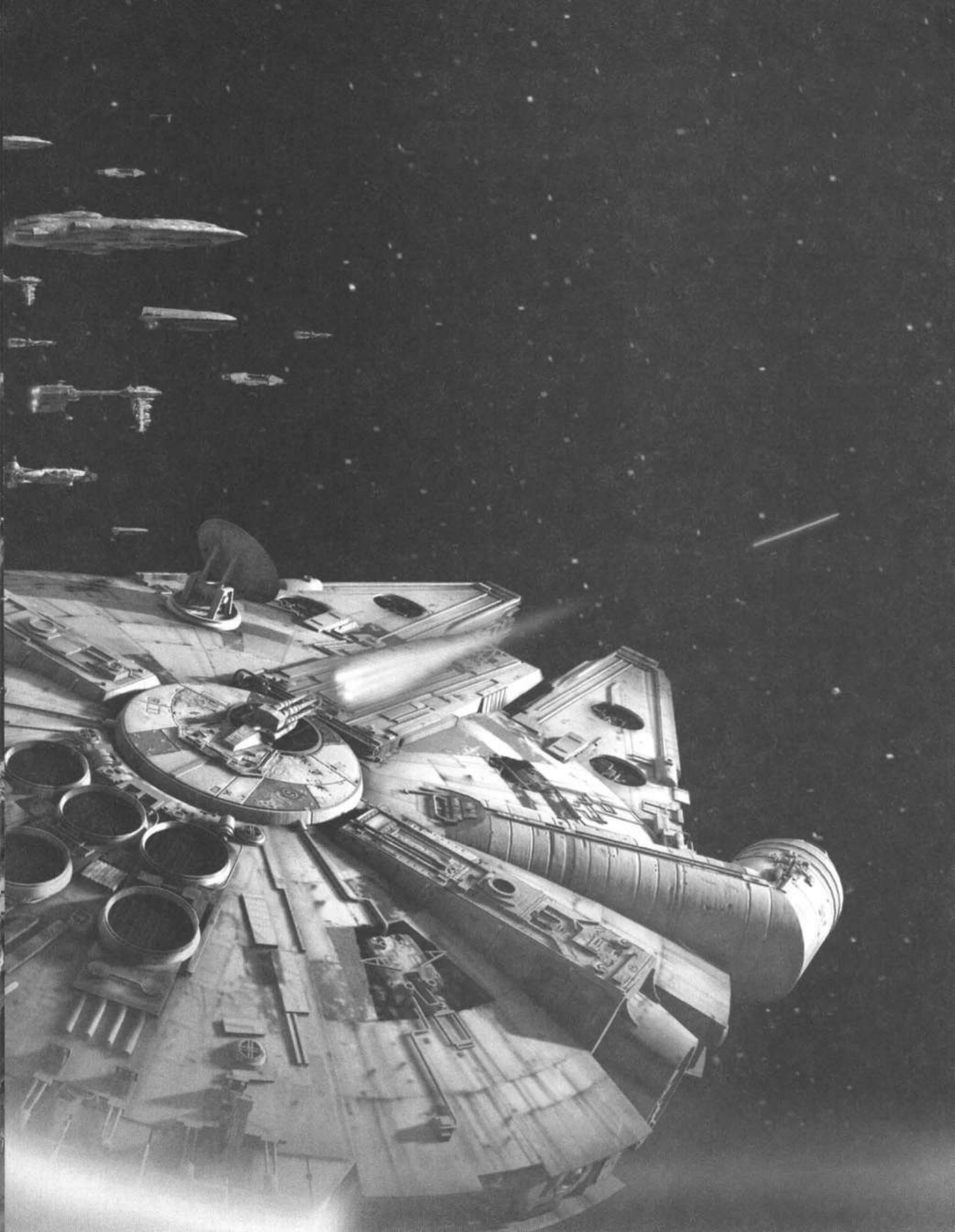
- Hyper to Twin Suns Station.

Twin Suns Station

- Put Cargo Canister Chi 8 in a safe place. (See figure 4-17.)
- Attack L/C first.
- Stay alive long enough to allow Aeron to escape.
- Anytime after Aeron leaves, pick up Chi 8 and hyper to Azzameen Home Base.

Azzameen Home Base

- Destroy the Razor fighters.
- Hyper to the Rebel base. (The mission will end when you get in range of the hyper buoy.)



Chapter 5
Joining the Rebellion

The Azzameen Home Base was now in the hands of the Empire and its sector designated off-limits. Emon departed the *Defiance* and set out to find contacts, establish a new base of operations for the family business, and get into loads of trouble.

Aeron went about consolidating the Azzameen assets and slicing her way into sometimes quite profitable ventures. I was assigned to pilot the *Otana* when necessary—not often enough.

Ace, the *lucky* one, joined the Rebellion. I was both pleased and disappointed—pleased because I knew Ace wanted to be a Rebel pilot, and disappointed because I could not go with him. What were all my piloting and gunnery circuits installed for, anyway?

The Empire was on the move and growing in power. The Rebel Alliance was attempting to organize itself into a comparable fighting force, while striking at the Imperials wherever they were vulnerable and weak. I did not see how the Rebels ever could become a *comparable* force, but they did occasionally manage to squeeze victory from a hopeless situation.

Most missions that occurred after Ace was recruited were executed without my presence. I have tried my best to obtain accurate and detailed information, but details are rarely accessible in times of maximum security. Only those few times when I teamed with Ace again did I have full access to mission details.

Had the humans more foresight, they might have included more highly trained, intelligent, combat-ready MK-09 maintenance droids on their rosters. They never learn.

Deep Space Strike Evaluation

To qualify as a Rebel fighter pilot, Ace had to pass a series of evaluations. The first test phase was designed to teach Ace techniques for *hit-and-fade* operations, a common Alliance tactic made necessary by a dearth of resources and equipment. The Empire had six to seven times the Rebel Alliance's resources. I will not mention the Empire's superior organizational aspects, but I will point out they made extensive use of droids—any Alliance High Command officials reading this book, please take note—although they sometimes demonstrated extreme cruelty in this regard.

This first combat simulation comprised three parts (target areas 1, 2, and 3). Ace was flying a Y-wing for the first time, and Gold Leader followed as observer.

Target Area 1 was relatively simple. Ace swooped in close to the Derilyn Platform *Tibanna*, came to a full stop in the most advantageous position possible, and picked off the rows of CN/L containers like sitting mynocks. The exploding containers, however, damaged the Derilyn Platform to which they were adjacent. As Ace finished off the last container, the platform began to explode.

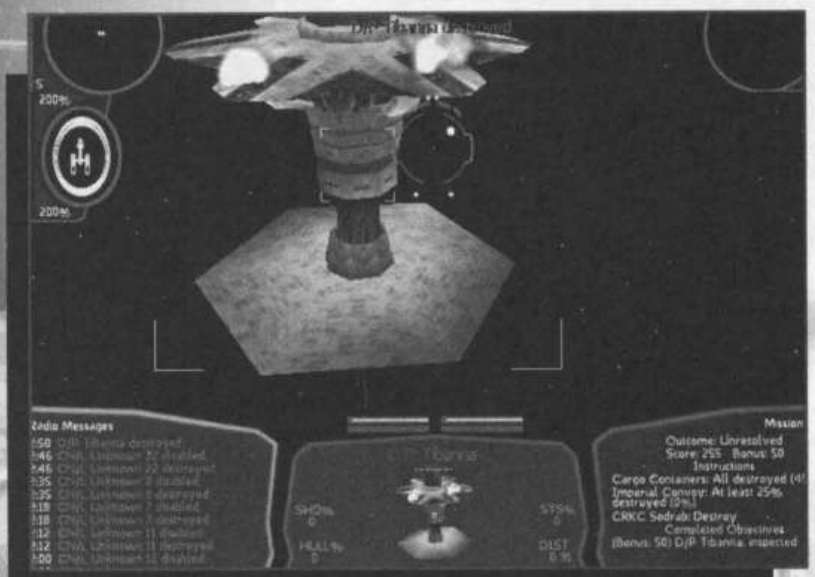


Fig. 5-1. Keep your distance when D/P *Tibanna* goes up.

Ace pulled away from the explosion and suffered only minor damage to his shields. He also managed to destroy two Skipray blastboats before exiting to the next target area.

Target Area 2 took Ace to RY/1 *Damorian*, near Draik 4. Ace again showed superb skills, holding his fire until he had maneuvered close to the docked CRKC *Sondrab*, slipping past the many large gun emplacements protecting the yard.

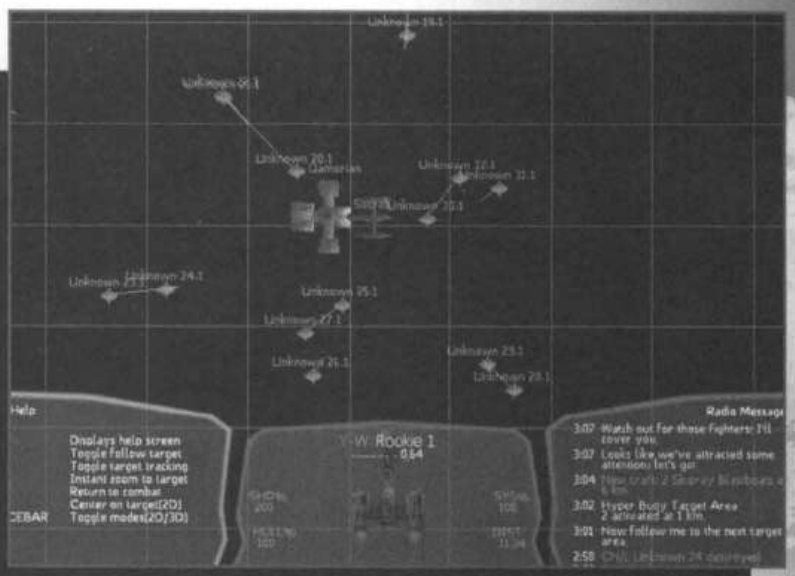


Fig. 5-2. Ace found a path through all this.

Ace got somewhat close to the cruiser before he *dumb-fired* four proton torpedoes directly at its midsection. He switched to lasers for the *coup de grace*, and pushed the Y-wing to full throttle as he swerved beyond its explosive radius. (Ace learns quickly, for a human.)

Ace dealt with the assault gunboats that arrived, and then turned back and started working on the shields of the repair yard. The appearance of an Imperial Star Destroyer, emitting squadrons of TIE interceptors and bombers, forced Ace to hyperspace out to Target Area 3 with the repair yard still intact. I am sure Ace had other plans for the *Damorian*.

Target Area 3 was thick with Imperial ships of all types preparing to evacuate. Ace identified a few, such as the *Lancer*-class frigates *Threat* and *Peril*, but the objective was to quickly destroy as many ships as possible, so he paid little attention to their designations.

Ace was smart enough to link his weapons to hit harder and disable some vessels for later mop-up. Two assault shuttles did little to hinder Ace: Gold Leader flew wingman and kept them off his tail.

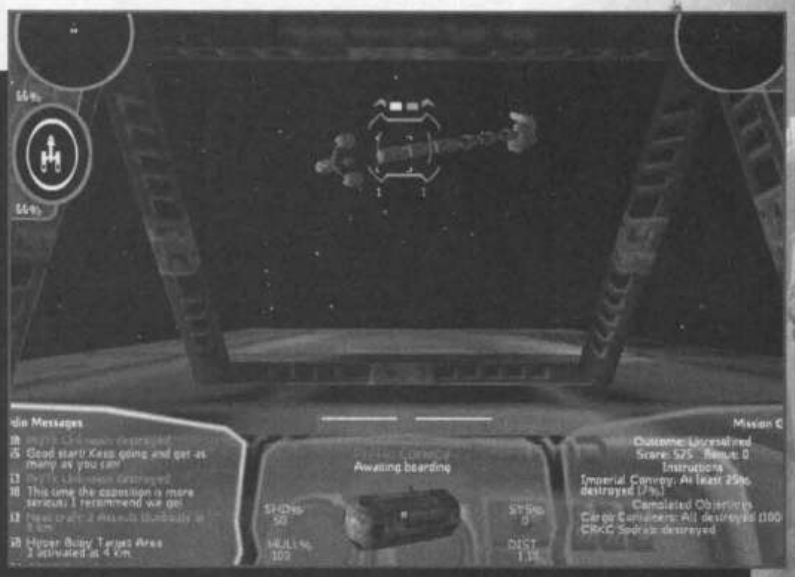


Fig. 5-3. Destroy one to stop them all. What a bargain!

Final tally:

2 gunboats

1 *Lancer*-class frigate (*Threat*)

2 Xiytair transports

1 Mobquet Transport(MOB) (1 escaped)

4 Pr/Tk tankers

1 CN/Hgr

Numerous CN/C, CF/2, and CF/3 containers

Plus all those credits from Target Area 3!

Do I have to tell you he passed the test?

The Combat Simulation

Winning this mission isn't difficult, but there are degrees of success. Passing the test takes little effort. It's not even necessary to reload.

Kill 9 or 10 containers in Target Area 1, and the exploding platform will take out the rest. You needn't engage any weapon emplacements in Target Area 2. Fly around beyond their range until you have an unobstructed shot at the Carrack cruiser and nail it with six proton torpedoes.

In Target Area 3, fire a torpedo at one container in each container train. This disables the trains and allows you to clean up easily with cannons. Watch the assault shuttles; they move very quickly for their size.

Fig. 5-4. An Unobstructed View

It's possible to destroy every enemy target you encounter in this mission—with the exception of the Imperial Star Destroyer in Target Area 2: even if you could manage against the fighters it launches (highly improbable in a Y-wing, but remotely possible with judicious use of the ion cannons), the convoy in Target Area 3 will escape before you can kill the ISD.

Otherwise, it's mostly a matter of timing. Kill the Carrack cruiser *Sondrab* last, and you can clear out that region. Getting the entire convoy is tricky. Make sure to take out the engines on the *Lancer*-class frigates, or they'll escape. Take out at least one container in every train. Let the assault shuttles pursue you into range of Olin's guns. He can finish them off as they try to get you. Lend a hand disabling them once their shields go down.

Alliance Cruiser Defiance

- Hyper to Target Area 1.

Target Area 1

- Destroy as many containers as you can before the Derilyn Platform explodes.
- Hyper to Target Area 2.

OR

- Destroy the Skipray blastboats.

OR

- Hyper to Alliance cruiser *Defiance* for a reload.

Target Area 2

- Fly around the defensive perimeter until you have a clear shot at the *Sondrab*.
- Destroy the *Sondrab* with six torpedoes.
- Hyper to Target Area 3.

OR

- Stay to fight the gunboats.

OR

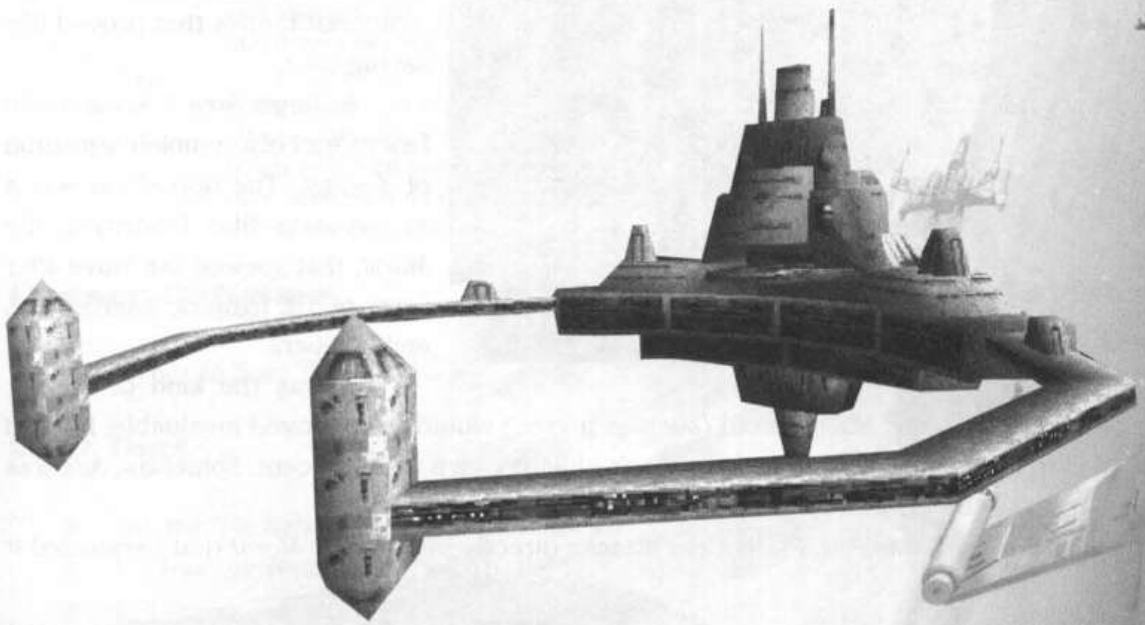
- Hyper to Alliance cruiser *Defiance* for a reload.

Target Area 3

- Fire a torpedo at one container in each container train.
- Close to cannon range, killing containers until mission is complete.
- Hyper to the Alliance cruiser *Defiance*.

Alliance Cruiser Defiance

- Enter the hangar or quit.



Starfighter Superiority Evaluation

Ace's second series of tests focused on starfighter superiority tactics. It is unfortunate MK-09 droids can not fit into X-wings; I am positive Ace considered taking me along on this one.

Ace could have slept through Target Area 1: only a few mere TIE fighters confronted him there. He easily took them out in a head-on run. Olin Garn, along as Ace's instructor and wingman, saw immediately that Ace was beyond this level of opposition and suggested moving to the next area.

Target Area 2 required Ace and Olin to fly as a *two-ship element* against a flight of TIE interceptors. The exercise was successful, although Ace's shield levels were alarmingly low as they hyperspaced to the next location.

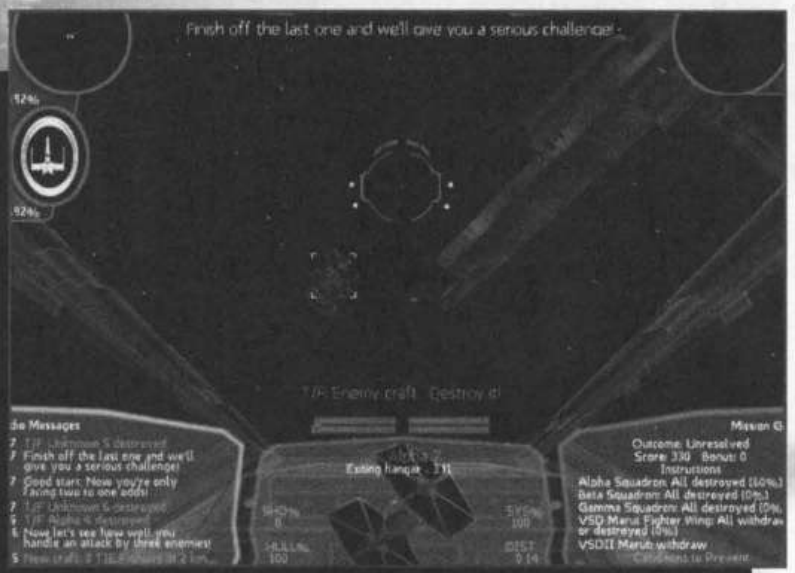

Finish off the last one and we'll give you a serious challenge!
Exiting hangar
Outcome: Unresolved
Score: 330 Bonus: 0
Instructions
Alpha Squadron: All destroyed (60%)
Beta Squadron: All destroyed (0%)
Gamma Squadron: All destroyed (0%)
VSD Marut Fighter Wing: All withdrawn or destroyed (0%)
VSDII Marut: withdraw

Fig. 5-5. Sitting Mynocks

Ace was one part of a four–X-wing flight in Target Area 3. Again, the opposition comprised TIE interceptors, but far more competitive ones, and in increasingly greater numbers. This exercise taught Ace valuable multicraft tactics that proved life-saving later.

In Target Area 4, Ace and Olin flew as part of a complete squadron of X-wings. The opposition was a *Victory*-class Star Destroyer, the *Marut*, that spewed out wave after wave of TIE fighters, interceptors, and bombers.

It was the kind of chaotic space battle where a trained MK-09 droid (such as myself) would have proved invaluable. I would have been aware of the missile that knocked Ace's shields down to 30 percent. Somehow, Ace was able to recharge his shields and survive against overwhelming odds.

According to Olin, it was Ace's relentless attacks directly on the VSD *Marut* that persuaded it to withdraw. Nice touch, Ace!

Final tally:

9 (1) TIE fighters

8 (2) TIE interceptors

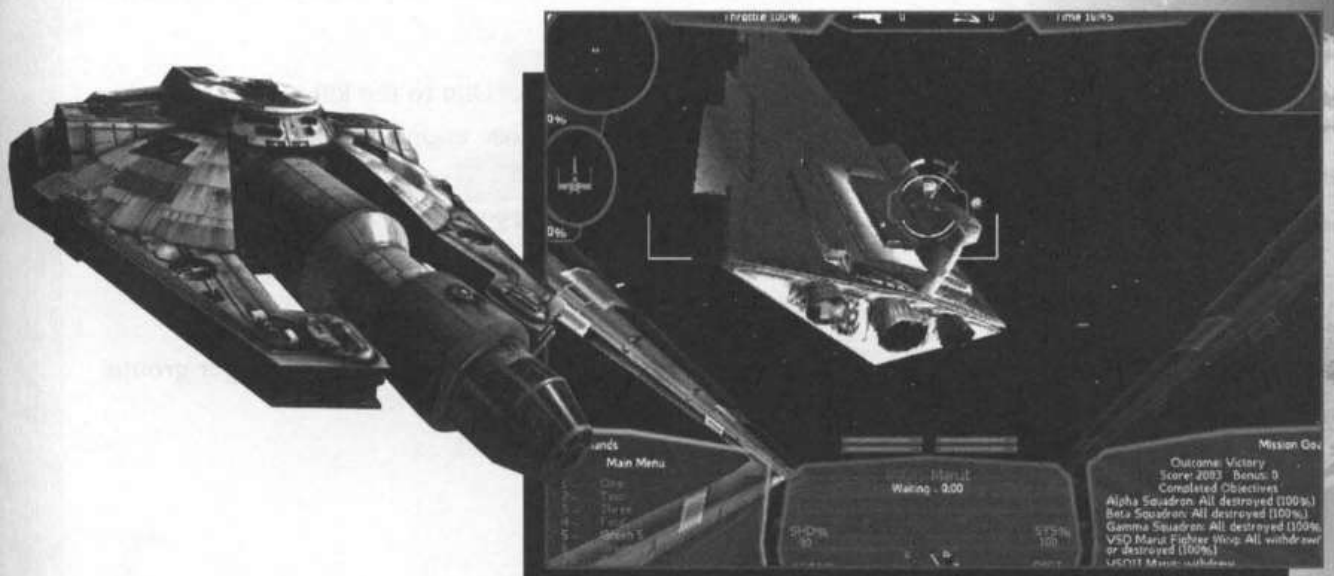


Fig. 5-6. Why don't you stay awhile, *Marut*?

The Combat Simulation

This test gives your dogfighting skills a workout, at least in the first two target areas. The last waves in each area can be vicious if you let them start shooting at you. If you're fast, and willing to risk fire from the Golan 3 Station, try to destroy the final two waves in each target area as they come out of the hangar.

In the second two sections of the test, the challenge becomes not so much dogfighting to stay alive, but trying to get in a few kills before your wingmates do. Of course, it's always possible to save yourself an interceptor or two by telling everyone to ignore your target (1). The *Victory*-class Star Destroyer in the last target area can be difficult to kill, if only because it tends to leave soon after its fighters are dead or its shields go out. Taking out its engines puts a stop to that. Don't forget the shield generators.

Cruiser Defiance

- Hyper to Solo Test.

Solo Test

- Kill the TIE fighter that starts behind you.
- Fly toward the wave of two TIE fighters exiting Golan 3.
- Kill the one on the right (when parallel with Golan) head-on. If you're quick, you can get the one on the left without looping around.
- Get the waves of three and four as they come out of the hangar, while they're helpless. Kill any that manage to avoid the initial pass. Beware of Golan 3 Station's guns.
- Hyper to Element Test when all fighters are dead. Make sure your recharge rates are maxed out as you approach the hyper buoy.

Element Test

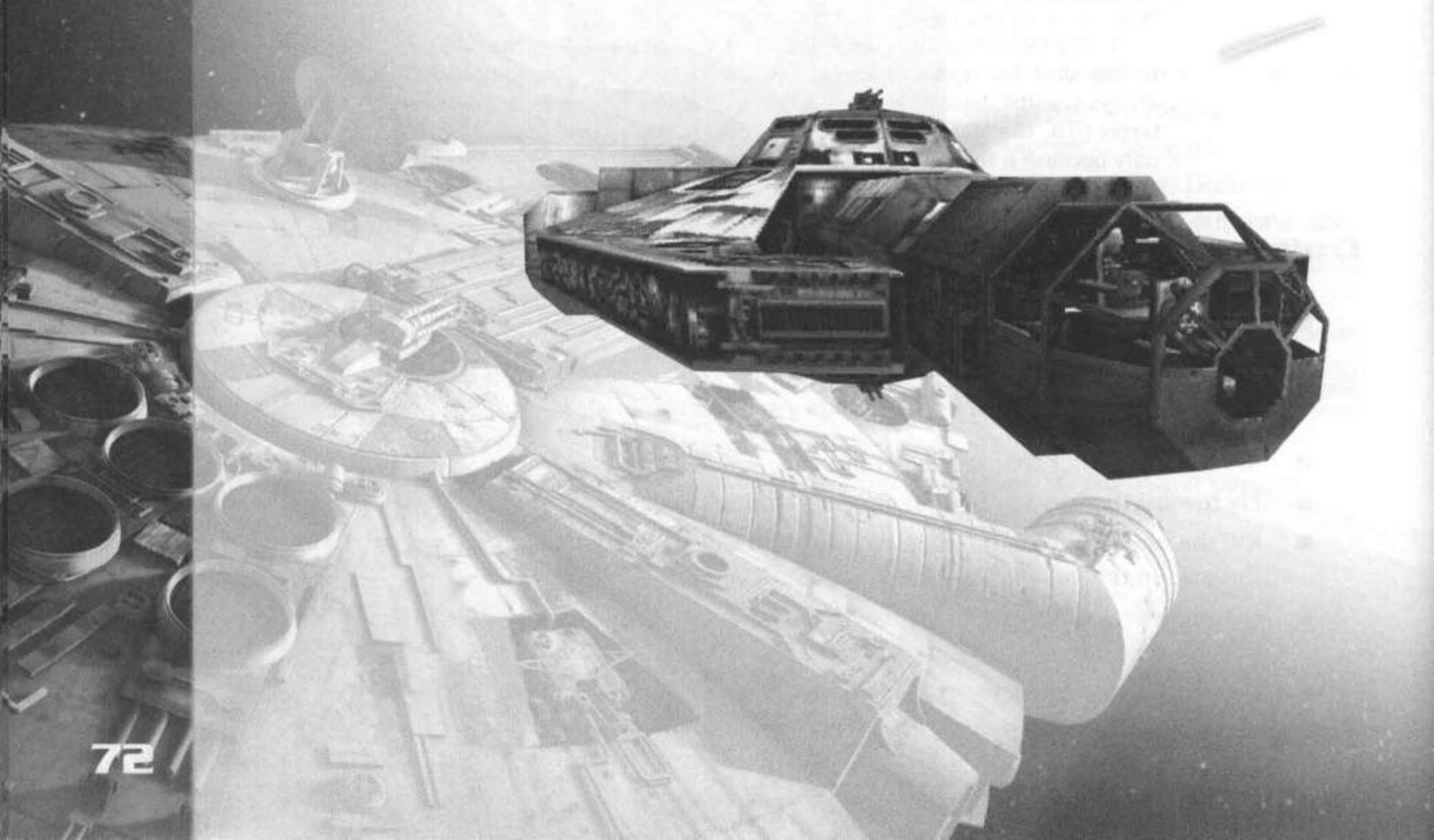
- Destroy the lone TIE interceptor head-on. Hurry to beat Olin to the kill.
- Kill successive waves of TIE interceptors. Again, get close enough to blast them as they come out of the hangar, if you can.
- Hyper to Group Test when all fighters are dead. Recharge on the move, if necessary.

Group Test

- Scramble to get a few kills. Try to keep your wingmates from being killed; larger groups can kill unbelievably quickly if they focus on one target.
- Hyper to the cruiser *Defiance* once all the fighters are dead.

Cruiser Defiance

- Again, scramble for kills. You're doing well if you get close enough for the TIE bombers to attack you—mixed blessing though it may be.
- The VSD can be tough. If parts of the mission were difficult for you, keep practicing!
- Once mission goals are complete, enter the hangar or quit.



Chapter 6
The Pilot Proving Grounds

The "proving grounds" is the unofficial name of the salvage yards hidden in an asteroid field, where the Alliance recycles the metals their cause needs so desperately. Because the Imperials usually stay clear of asteroid fields, the Rebels use these areas for such operations. Clever.

Alliance engineers designed special rings to form huge, flexible conduits that adjust instantly to the fluctuating distances between asteroids. Rebel construction teams created enormous rooms within the larger asteroids—an impressive use of a hostile environment. Massive blocks of scrap metal move from the compactor to the smelting room through the ring conduits.

Rebel fighter pilots find these hazardous constructions the perfect place to practice. Alliance High Command does not condone this misuse of the salvage yards publicly, and given that some pilots do lose their lives in the yards, I can understand their position.

Naturally, this does not stop Rebel pilots, including Ace, from flying the challenging courses. There is even an ongoing "Top 10" list to encourage such activity. Shameful.

There is an unspoken agreement that pilots who fly the yards reveal no details about the courses. To learn about them, you must fly them. Thus, the following descriptions of Ace's experiences in the proving grounds are brief, based on only bits of data gleaned from a few recorded conversations.

The Combat Simulation

Several techniques exist that will help on every level of "The Pilot Proving Grounds." Learn each level's idiosyncrasies. The pilots who consistently get the best times tend to use their heads-up display to generate an external camera ([/]) that allows them to more accurately judge the boundaries of their craft.

Optimize your energy usage for speed, but be wary of letting your energy wear out if you're in a level with active guns. Because it takes only one hit to take out the ring laser control units, you needn't supercharge your lasers, so dump laser energy to shields often. Depending on your ability to hit tiny targets while moving quickly, it might be a good idea to turn gun harmonization off.

Competing Against Other Pilots

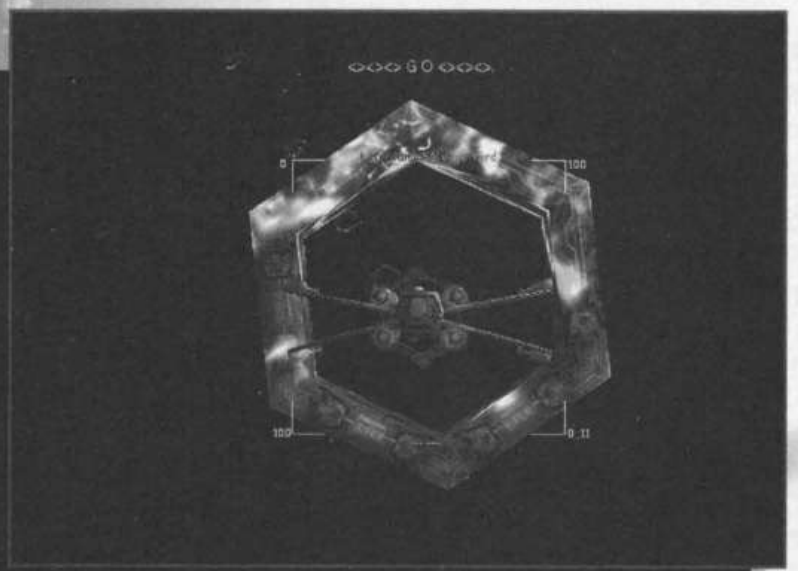


Fig. 6-1. A View from Behind

Piloting one of multiple craft racing through the yard is vastly different from going it alone. Don't underestimate the difficulty of confronting obstacles potentially as quick and clever as you are. Techniques exist to help you maximize your chances of coming out on top, however.

Most important, of course, is to learn the route through the salvage yards well enough by yourself to get a good time. Assuming equal craft, you can maintain a decisive lead almost indefinitely through skill. Thus, the early part of the race can determine its ultimate outcome.

A race usually is a confused melee at the start. The pilot who gains the lead becomes the obvious target and likely won't keep it for long. If there are more than three competitors, it can be a good idea to hang back a bit and try to pass when the other pilots are preoccupied with each other.

Unless it's a two-ship race, avoid getting entangled in back-and-forth laser fights that slow you. Let the other craft get just far enough ahead that it's always in laser range, and pick the right moment to pass.

If all the combat simulators involved share a high-speed, high-bandwidth connection, enabling Collision Effects will add strategic depth and difficulty. A collision is the most effective way to render an opponent temporarily helpless. Of course, you'll suffer the effects of collision, as well, but there's a trick that can help tilt the odds in your favor. The duration of your out-of-control spin depends on your throttle percentage when you hit. It can be tricky, but it's possible to drop to one-third throttle just before you ram your opponent. You'll both be knocked for a loop, but you'll probably recover first.

Ringer 1

I have been told this course is perhaps the most deceptive. It seems simple: fly as fast as you can through a series of rings without missing any (something a droid could do using 0.0013 calculation energy).

Ace, however, underestimated the difficulty. He mentioned that his hull had been "yellowed" once or twice from "minor" collisions. But damage is damage and all damage requires repair. Still, that is not a worry for selfish Rebel pilots: just whistle to the nearest overworked maintenance droid and say, "Fix it."

Ace eventually achieved the third-highest score for this course.

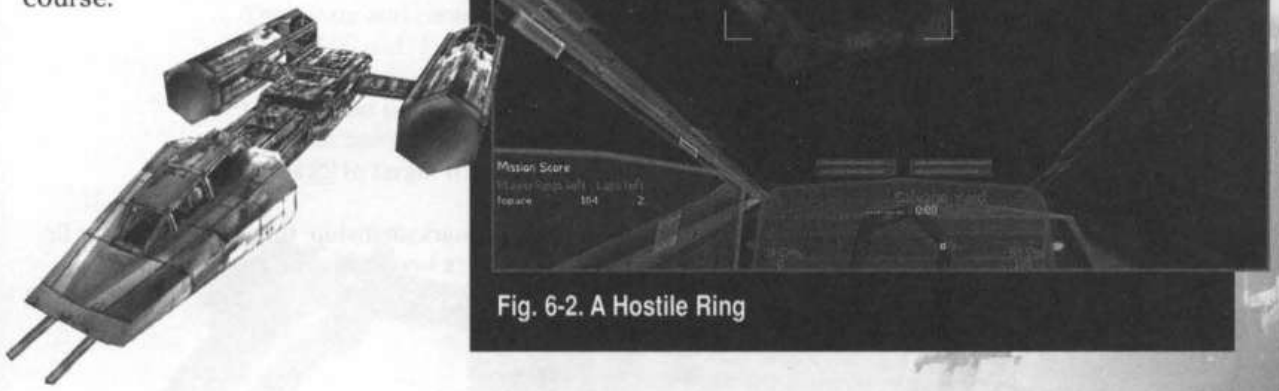


Fig. 6-2. A Hostile Ring

The Combat Simulation

This is the most basic of the proving grounds levels. It's virtually impossible to avoid laser fire from the rings, so it pays to keep some energy coming into the system, both to power the cannons to shoot the ring laser controllers and to maintain the shields in case you miss.

Ringer 2

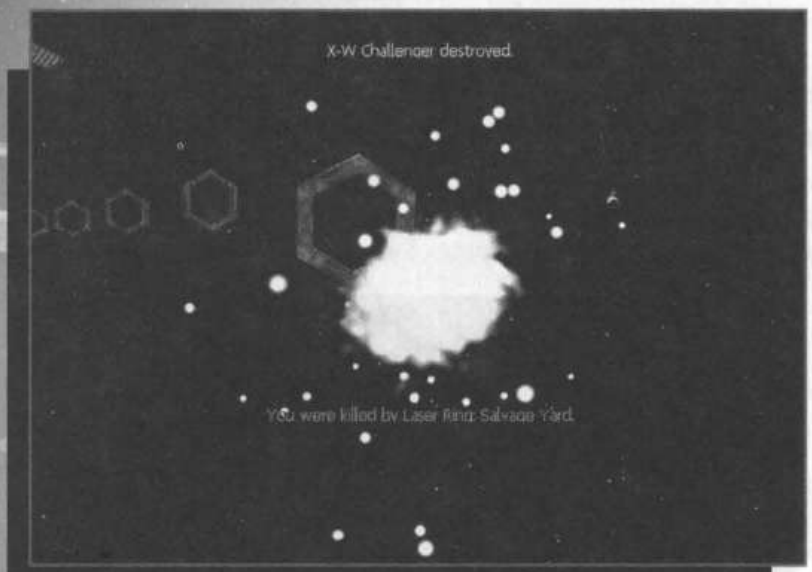


Fig. 6-3. Not What You Want to See

The second ring-conduit course was twice as long as the first and included lasers fore and aft of the rings (a revealing tidbit I happened on in a lounge on the CRS *Defiance*). Ace never confirmed this, but repair records for his personal X-wing satisfy my suspicions, and he did say that this particular run had him changing his shielding quite often.

The Combat Simulation

If ever there was a place that demanded superior marksmanship, this is it. With rings firing in two directions, taking out the laser controllers becomes even more important. Taking the first lap a little slower can make it easier to disable all the firing rings, allowing you to take the second lap at maximum speed.

Crazy Eight

This variation on the rings is among the most popular. The course is shaped like the numeral 8 and tunnels through an asteroid with intersecting paths at its hollow core. (I wonder if those bragging Rebel pilots ever considered what would happen if multiple ships from multiple directions converged there at high speeds. Probably not.) Rumor has it the wreckage of pilot Ched Varga's Y-wing is still visible in an ice lake there. I will say no more.

Ace dismissed the dangers, stating that this was a superb course for laser races—speed contests with lasers modified temporarily to affect only the engines of another ship. Thus, pilots fire at each other to slow down their opponents.

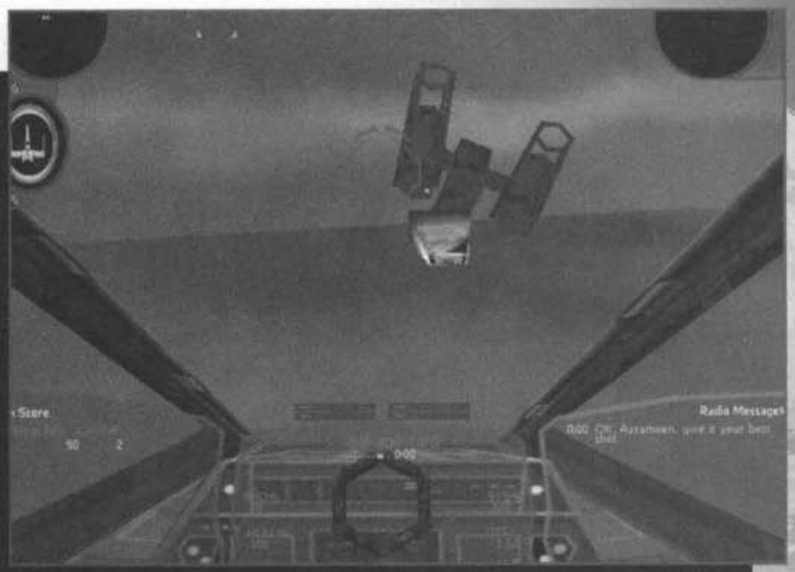


Fig. 6-4. Ched Varga, May He Rest Well with the Force

The Combat Simulation

The twists and turns in the asteroid field are very difficult unless you use the rotational control [1] and [3] provide (rudder control, for those configurations that have one). It's easy to get stuck; if you do, drop to zero throttle and turn your way out. Don't try to go through the tunnels full-tilt: cannons off, shields at maximum is the safest compromise between speed and maneuverability. If you lose track of the direction you were headed in, press [O] to target the next ring.

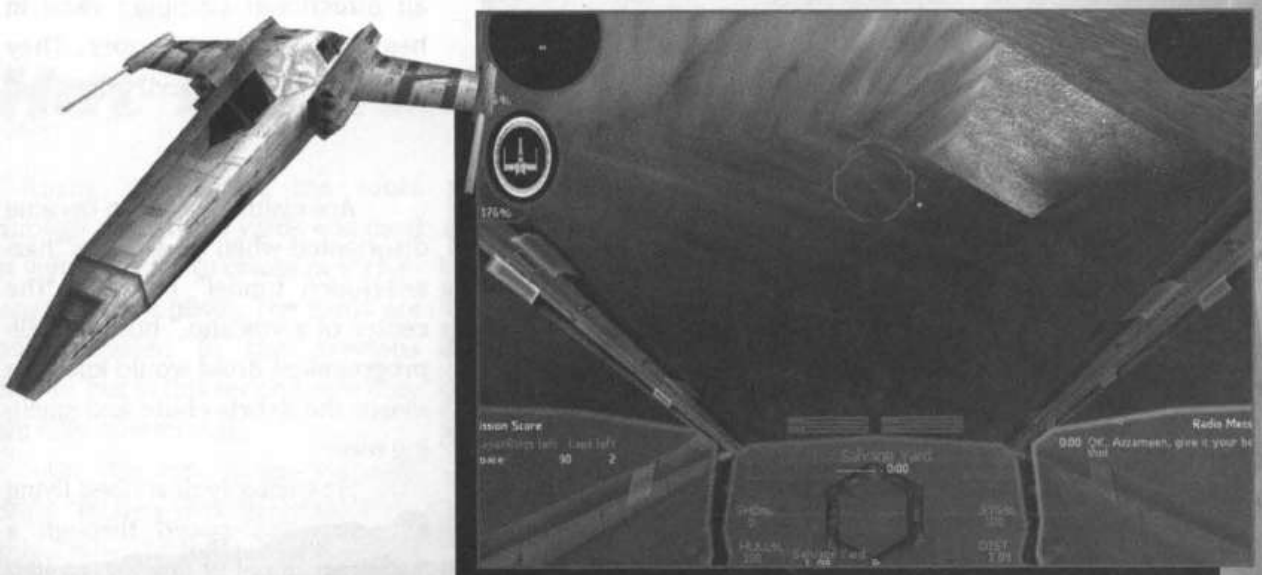


Fig. 6-5. A Tough Turn

Fly Through

I deduce from Ace's scattered recollections that this course *is* the salvage yards. While Ace was off flying around the galaxy in his fancy MK-09–less X-wings, A-wings, and Y-wings, Aeron uploaded all current data on recycling methods into my memory banks.

Fig. 6-6. Follow the Arrows

Said Ace, "I got completely disoriented when I flew into this strange chamber. I came to a full stop to look around for a passageway. Suddenly, the massive metal floor, or ceiling, I don't know which, started closing in on me. I slammed full throttle and hoped the green symbols on the walls were pointing me in the right direction."

Of course they were. The green symbols are mandatory on all directional stripping used in heavy-equipment interiors. They were intended to aid vehicles making internal repairs, not to help a bunch of daredevil pilots find their way through a restricted area.

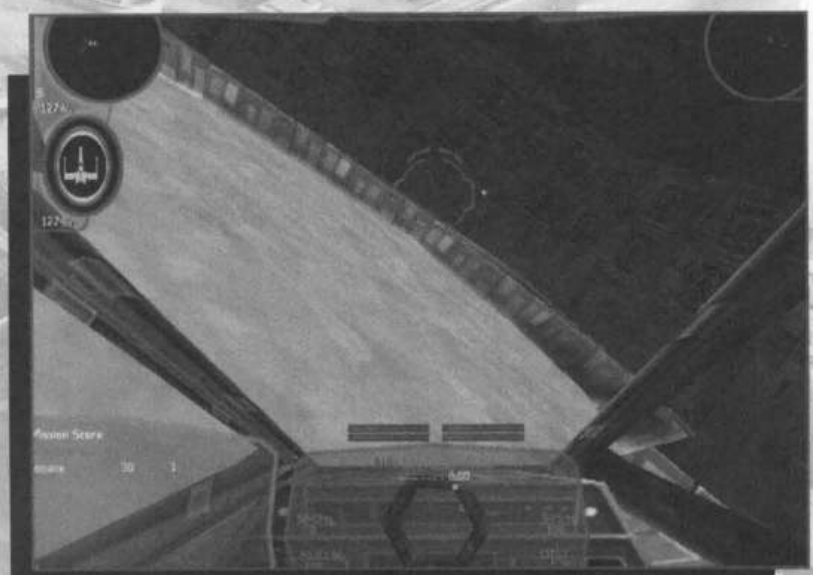


Fig. 6-7. All is quiet.

Ace claimed he again became disoriented when he exited a "hazard-ridden tunnel" to enter "the center of a volcano," but any half-programmed droid would know he meant the debris chute and smelting room.

He excitedly described flying at nearly full speed through a "twisting tunnel of flowing, molten rock so hot the protective coating was peeling off my cockpit"—that is, the chute that guides the molten metals to the centrifuge.

Ace explained how he suddenly entered a "huge metal maze with crisscrossing beams of death" (the centrifuge, where the various metals are separated, cooled, and formed into large ingots).

Ace favored this course, and eventually obtained the fourth-highest score ever recorded for it.

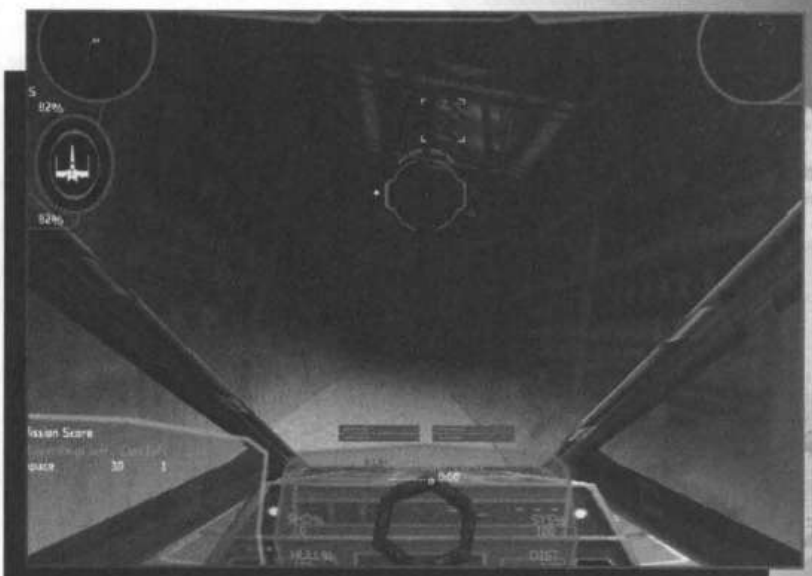


Fig. 6-8. This exit can be difficult to see.

The Combat Simulation

Again, the turns on this level are difficult to manage without rudder control. Be especially wary of the lava-floored tunnel after the smelting chamber. It pays to fly this level slowly once or twice before trying for a good time. At high speeds, it can be difficult to see where you need to go the first time through.

Hot Fly Through

I finally determined the route through the salvage yards was used at various times to create new challenges for the pilots. The yards are not activated in the previous course, but in this second race they are fully operational.

On this run, Ace's "volcano" drips "molten rock the size of my ship." When he told me he had fired his lasers and changed the environment to a more favorable one, I realized he had blasted the main power switches. (That must have pleased the local repair department.)

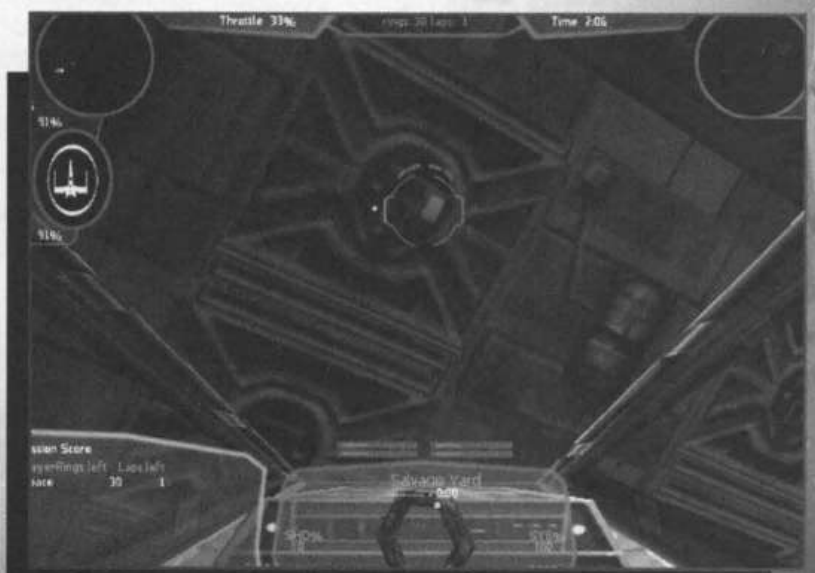


Fig. 6-9. The Main Power Switches

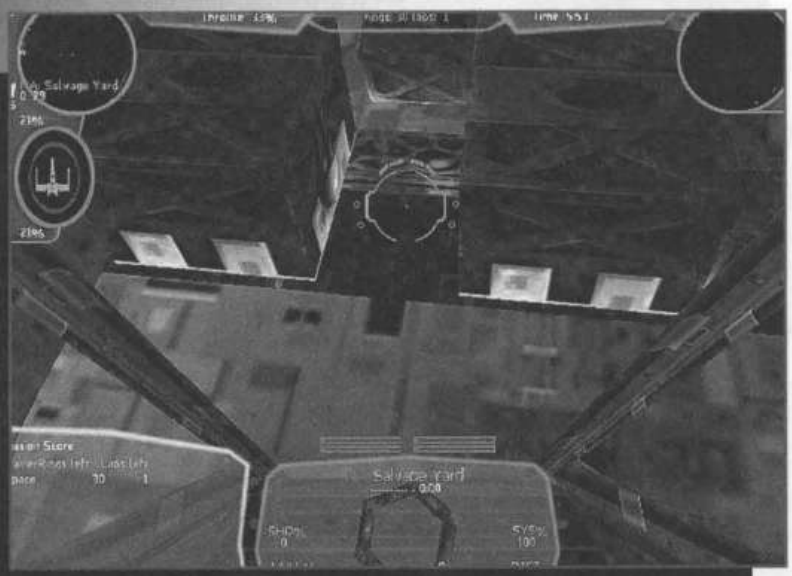


Fig. 6-10. Exiting the Centrifuge

Ace described maneuvering his X-wing through a "maze of thrashing, massive hammers, frantically looking for a safe exit" (the activated centrifuge). He must have learned where the exit was during his flights through the yards when the centrifuge was deactivated.

His later escape from the "thrashing, massive hammers" was followed by a brief (but dangerous) passage through another series of rings—"nearly being crushed by giant, metallic rams" (the ingots in transit through the ring conduits).

I reminded Ace of Aeron's wish that he play it safe and not take too many chances. He eyed my deactivation switch, so I changed the subject. I never learned how he scored on this one.

The Combat Simulation

The active salvage yard systems alter slightly the priorities for flying through it successfully. You must save shield energy for both sets of rings, and the transit from the smelting room to the centrifuge inflicts gradual shield damage, as well. Navigating past the compacted blocks floating through the first set of rings can be tricky: use the external camera (/) to judge the best approach for your particular craft. Because there are many obstacles on this level that move in unfamiliar ways, practice is an especially appropriate way to improve your time.

There and Back

Again, Ace risked a costly Alliance ship and his own life to fly a third variation of the salvage yards course. You would think battling real-life Imperial starfighters would be enough for these pilots. They would never make it as droids.

Anyway, Ace went through another embellished account of his experience in the salvage yards. This variation, which required him to return to the starting point, forced Ace to fly a reverse path through the smelter room and centrifuge.

Fig. 6-11. A Painful Way to Go

It is simple for a droid to think and react in reverse, but it can be confusing for a human. Ace confessed he suffered minor structural damage manipulating the course in reverse. "It was like a completely different environment," he said.

As Ace recalled the second passage through the molten metals areas, I had to comment: did he realize that such exposure to high temperatures within such a short time span put an unnecessary and dangerous strain on his vessel? All he said was, "It was cool."

Cool? It must have been at least 300 degrees in there!

Fig. 6-12. Finding a way out of the centrifuge in both directions is hard.

The Combat Simulation

This level requires even better marksmanship than "Ringer 2." If you missed the laser control units on the way in, you'll suffer for it on the way back, because you can't hit the control units from the back side of the rings. And destroying the individual cannons is far more difficult. Also, be extremely careful around the ingots and the compacted blocks on the way back. They don't move quickly, but because they're coming toward you, their velocity is added to your own when you collide. It's not a pretty way to die.

Droid Rescue

This version of the salvage yard challenges upset me so much I had to turn myself in for a complete circuit examination. It was most certainly a human—a very twisted human—who thought up this variation.

Read on:

"Once more I was confronted with the dangers of the run, but this time I had to rescue a stranded R2 unit located somewhere deep within the interior of the hazardous environment. I finally found the R2 unit and made a daring pickup. I tried my best to fly the X-wing in such a manner as to avoid damage to the droid, but realized that that was impossible."

Horrible. Simply horrible. I have the utmost respect for Ace's piloting capabilities, and I am positive he exercised every possible precaution to avoid damage to the poor R2 unit. However, because I am knowledgeable of the recycling process, I can only imagine the droid's condition at the end.

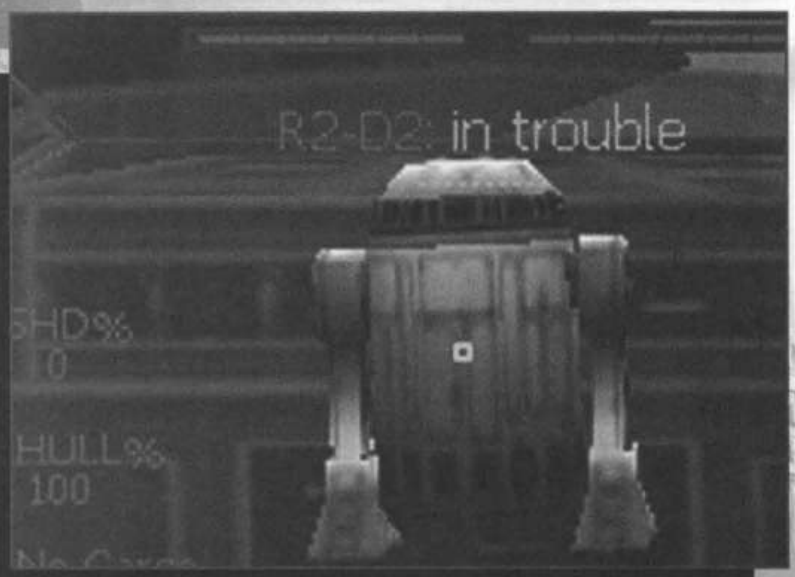


Fig. 6-13. Does this droid look unhappy to you?

I have no special allegiance to R2 units. In fact, it disturbs me to no end that they have been chosen to accompany Rebel pilots in their fighters. I have always believed that MK-09 maintenance droids are superior in every way to the R2 droids and would make far more efficient copilots. But *they* make the cute little sounds. Still, there is no excuse for treating a droid this way.

The Combat Simulation

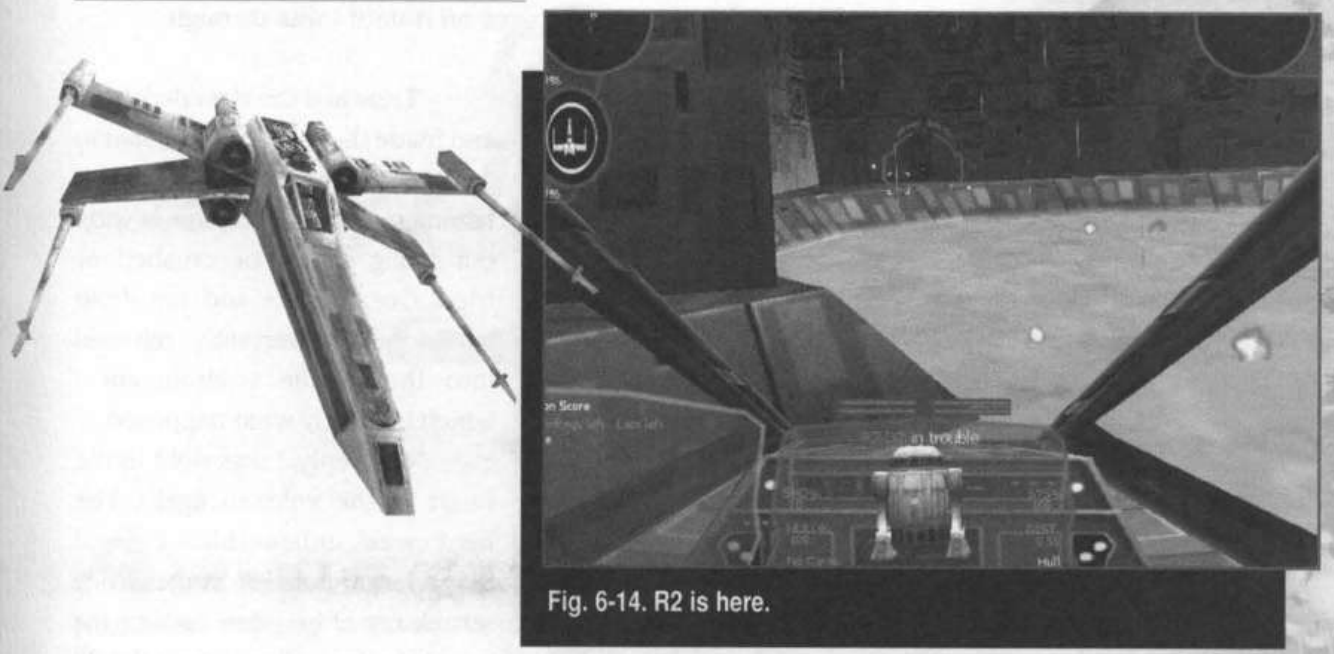


Fig. 6-14. R2 is here.

You'll find the R2 unit in the smelting chamber. The mechanics of picking it up differ slightly from those for picking up other objects. Instead of initiating a docking sequence, pressing Shift P simply activates the docking tractor beam, and the droid attaches itself automatically. This means you can't rely on the docking sequence to prevent a collision and must plan your approach carefully. Furthermore, should your craft become damaged enough that the combat simulator generates a new one for you, you must grab R2 again. As with other objects, an R2 unit's mass slows your craft.

Note that no droids were harmed in the making of the holographic combat simulation of the Rebel salvage yards.

Dangerous Droid Rescue

Is there no end to the horror? Again, the unofficial challenges take place within the salvage yards, and again an unfortunate R2 droid unit is used as a plaything.

Ace did not recount his first solo flight through this variation of the course, but skipped to the disturbing account of his second run.

Strap yourself in firmly:

"I hit full throttle immediately to start the clock ticking. Olin had already knocked me off the Top 10 chart, so I had to improve my time by another 19 seconds.

"I had forgotten some of the details from my first run, so each chamber interior was once again a maneuvering nightmare; hazards were everywhere as I searched for the passageway out and to the droid. I finally glimpsed the opening and did not take my eyes off it until I was through.

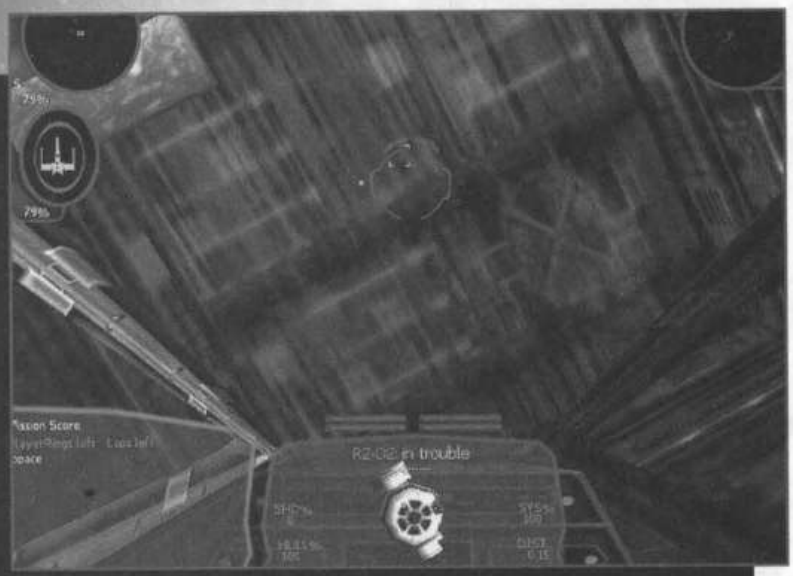


Fig. 6-15. The R2 unit waits at the end of the course.

"I reached the stranded droid and made the pickup. Now I had to go back through the thrashing hammers and molten tunnels without being struck or crushed or fried. One mistake and the droid would be inadvertently released into the hostile environment—which is exactly what happened.

"Suddenly, I was right in the heart of the volcano again. The heat was unbearable. Several times large globs of molten rock struck my ship, once making me veer into the wall and drop the R2 unit. I twisted and turned and searched until, finally, I saw it floating just above the molten lake. It was making a heck of a racket as I swooped down and locked onto it. Not slowing at all, I swerved back up toward the tunnel opening and made my exit."

If this disturbs you as much as it did me, please write to the following department and help eliminate such terrible behavior:

Organization for Droid and Machine Abuse
Department 1007, Civil Deck 10
Alliance Headquarters, CRS *Independence*

The Combat Simulation

This is by far the most grueling of all seven levels. It's as much an endurance trial as "There and Back," with a droid slowing you down on the return trip. In theory, however, if you learn the levels in order, you should be prepared for it, because it demands no new skills.

Chapter 7
Clearing the Way

Convoy Attack

Ace's first official mission as a Rebel pilot was a full assault on an Imperial supply convoy, a support fleet for the Empire's search group hunting stray Rebel craft near the Hoth system. Ace was part of four-craft X-wing group Red, covering Y-wing group Green. The mission was simple enough for even the average human: destroy every enemy vessel in the convoy.

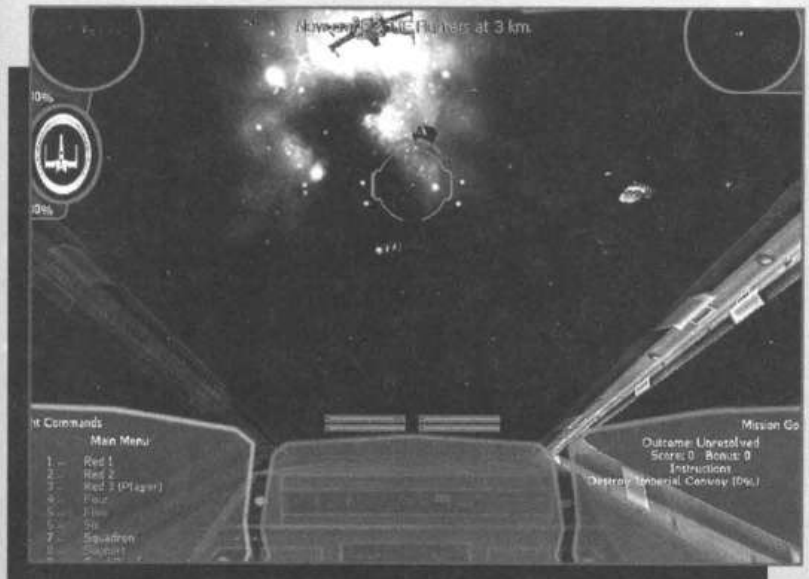


Fig. 7-1. Take out that convoy!

Both groups left the CRS *Defiance* and immediately hyperspaced to the convoy's last reported location. Sure enough, they took an entire fleet of Mobquet transports (nine), container transports (two), and modular conveyors (two) by surprise. But the convoy was not exactly helpless. The Imperial Strike cruiser *Scythe* was there, too, carrying an entire squadron of TIE fighters.

Per procedure, the Y-wings headed directly for the supply vessels. It was up to Ace and his X-wing companions to protect them and send any interfering TIE fighters to the great debris field in the sky.

The wait for enemy starfighters was brief. The Imperial Strike cruiser responded quickly, releasing the first two waves of TIE fighters. The starfighters assessed the situation accurately and headed straight for the Y-wings. It must be unnerving to see enemy fighters coming at you and yet stay focused on the primary objectives—the supply ships.

The transports put up as much resistance as they could, but it was minimal. Missiles swarmed toward the convoy and made contact with their targets almost simultaneously. The resulting explosions, Ace recalled, made a massive fireball, and the blast actually rocked Ace and his X-wing.

Ace's X-wing group had no problem with the first two waves of TIEs, but there was no time to recover before three new waves (the *Scythe*'s remaining starfighters) left the Strike cruiser and joined the fray.

The initial Y-wing attack devastated the convoy. The surviving ships frantically prepared to hyperspace out; most were damaged beyond hope.

The last six TIE starfighters had slightly more success than the first. They caught one Y-wing in a disadvantageous position and attacked it as a group. Ace's X-wing group eliminated the six TIEs with record speed, but the Y-wing was lost.

The Imperial Strike cruiser *Scythe* escaped with some damage, but the supply convoy was history. Ace's first real mission, then, was considered a success!

The Combat Simulation

There's more than one way to fly this mission, mostly depending on whether you want to destroy the Strike cruiser *Scythe*. If you just want to get through it, just keep on top of the TIEs and help the Y-wings clear the convoy once the TIEs are gone. You may need to distract the *Scythe* if friendly craft get too close: fire a few shots to get its attention, and then evade.

If you want the Strike cruiser dead, plan for it from the beginning. As soon as you enter the convoy's region, tell your wingmates to join formation using the flight orders MFD (Tab). This prevents them from launching their proton torpedoes at the convoy. When the TIE fighters launch, send your wingmates after that target type. Immediately after the last TIE fighter is destroyed, send your wingmates (and all the torpedoes you had them save) after the *Scythe*, and dumb-fire your torps at its engines. With its engines destroyed, it won't be leaving anytime soon.

At this point, you may want to tell your wingmates to attack the convoy ship closest to leaving, because they may not do well against the Strike cruiser. From here, use standard tactics for attacking capital ships (with lasers) to destroy the *Scythe*. Once the STRKC is gone, help mop up.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to the Imperial convoy.

Imperial Convoy

- Destroy all TIE fighters.
- Help destroy the convoy.
- You may need to distract the STRKC.
- Hyper to the CRS *Defiance*.

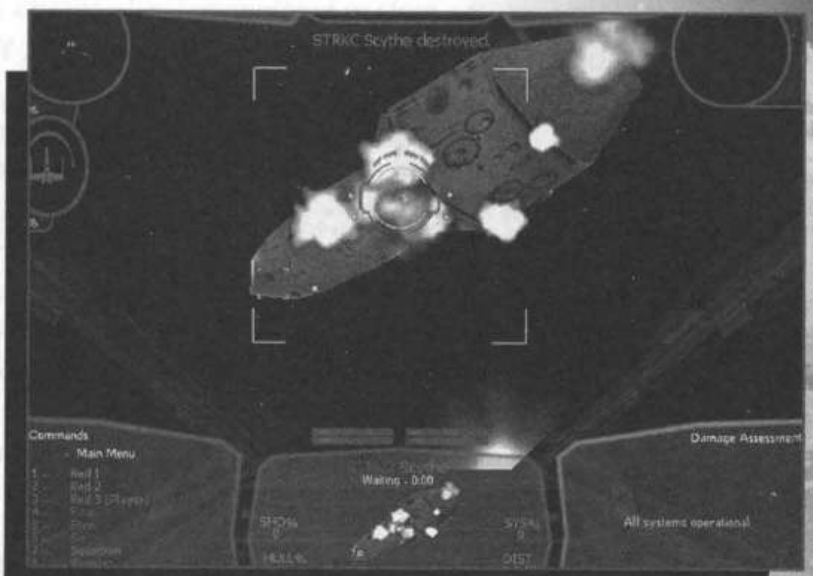


Fig. 7-2. Good-bye, *Scythe*.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rescue Uncle Antan

I was thrilled when Emon ordered me to take the *Otana* and pick up Ace at the CRS *Defiance*. For the record, it was not my fault I arrived later than scheduled. I have tolerated the accusations I went on a "joyride" with the *Otana* only because I am programmed to absorb verbal abuse. It is true I have what might be termed a "passion" for flying the *Otana*, but it is not my place to take liberties with it.

Ace appeared pleased to see me, and immediately ordered me to move to the turret position. I did so, and we were off to the hyper buoy. Before long we arrived at the rendezvous point.

Emon was already there in his Firespray, *Andrasta*. He is not the sentimental type, and started right in familiarizing Ace with the plan: The Azzameens long ago had planted a mole at a Viraxo facility; that mole recently brought news that Uncle Antan was being held prisoner and had just been transferred to the Viraxo facility where the mole was stationed.

It was arranged for the mole to manipulate Uncle Antan's move to a cell near the facility's topmost airlock. There, he would be rescued by—*me*, actually. You do not think humans would risk one of their own if a lowly *droid* was handy, do you?

We hyperspaced to the Viraxo location. Ace and I planned to sneak up close to the facility and dock. But the *sneaking* part did not go as planned: two planetary fighters turned to engage us almost immediately. I forced them to weave and dodge, which cost them speed, and they fell behind. Emon got onto the tail of one and destroyed it instantly. Our planetary fighter broke away and turned to attack Emon, who now had three of them to deal with. I suppose that made him happy.

Finally, Ace and I snuck to the Platform 5–type facility and docked. I exited the *Otana* and rolled onto the platform surface. I could describe my heroic entry into the facility's depths and my efficient hacking of security systems to free Uncle Antan, but I will refrain. This is Ace's story, not mine.

While I was inside, Ace manned the turret laser and was able to destroy one planetary fighter and damage another. Emon finished them off.

As Uncle Antan and I boarded the *Otana*, a *Victory*-class Star Destroyer appeared at 3 km! Waves of TIE fighters popped onto the CMD. I counted nine before Ace hit the throttle and detached from the platform.

Emon suggested we split up and meet at the previous rendezvous point. He distracted the TIEs while we straight-lined to the hyper point. Some caught up to us, though, and I was a busy droid in that turret. I was just beginning to enjoy myself when Ace engaged the hyperdrive.

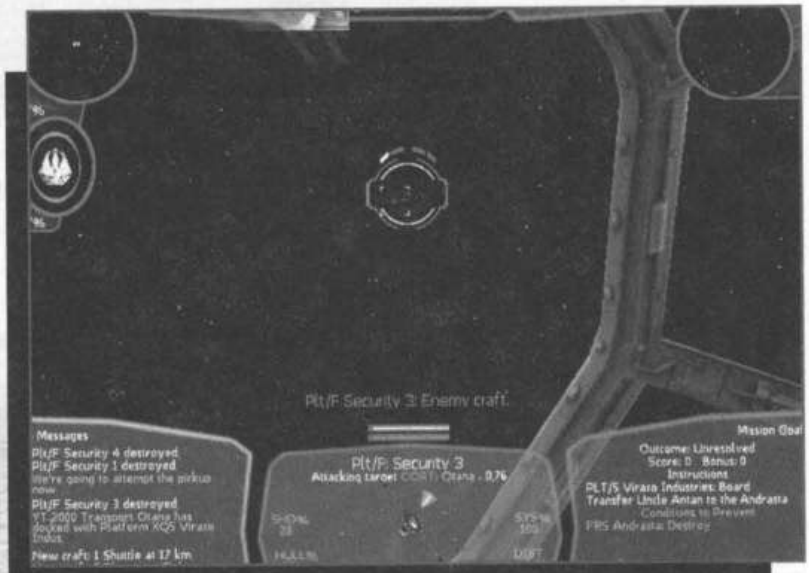


Fig. 7-3. View from the Turret

Ace and I waited at the rendezvous point for Emon, who arrived shortly. We docked with him and transferred Uncle Antan to the *Andrasta*. Uncle Antan was so grateful he later gave Ace his treasured Jar'Kai dueling swords. I keep them safe on the *Otana* when Ace is away.

I took the controls again after dropping Ace at the CRS *Defiance*. Later I learned he had received a new rank—Flight Officer. Where was mine?

The Combat Simulation

This mission marks the first time you must defend your stationary craft from the turret. The trick is to shoot incoming enemies only until they break off their attack. There's a point at which they're in range of your cannon but you're *not* in range of theirs, so if you're quick you can avoid damage entirely.

As soon as one ship breaks off, use [E] to find the next closest. When nothing is targeting you, destroy any fighters in range. It's likely you'll take *some* damage, so make sure your shields recharge while you're docked. Use your HUD to edit your craft's geometry out of your field of view, using [<], as the fighters are likely to approach from the sides of your craft.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to Emon.

Emon

- Hyper to Viraxo.

Viraxo

- Dock with Platform *Viraxo Industries* immediately.
- Watch for the arrival of two planetary fighters. They'll be the first to attack.
- Protect yourself with the turret.
- As soon as docking is complete, dump everything to engines and head for the hyper point, jinking like crazy.
- Hyper to Emon.

Emon

- Dock with Emon.
- Hyper to CRS *Defiance* or quit.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Reconnaissance of Imperial Task Force

Ace's second mission, as Flight Officer Rebel Pilot Azzameen, was to locate an Imperial task force and identify the ships attached to it for Alliance High Command. Such missions require pilots to fly dangerously close to some very powerful vessels. Engaging enemy fighters can be disastrous on such missions, as avoiding fire from the capital ships becomes far more difficult. It is not a sightseeing tour.

Ace and Blue Leader were given A-wings for this duty—wise decision. The A-wings' speed is the pilots' most valuable asset and Ace has always been adept at evasive tactics.

Their orders were to check out three designated search areas. The first was empty, so they continued to the second within a couple of minutes. Blue Leader commented, "I guess we scared them away," but I doubt that was the case.

Search Area 2 was just an asteroid field. Ace didn't hyper out for 6.32 minutes, according to the records. My guess is he took this opportunity to play a round of asteroid billiards, a ridiculous game Emon had taught him. The object was to use one's lasers to knock small asteroids off-course to collide with other asteroids. I do not think either pilot considered possible negative consequences. Some humans never grow up.

Search Area 3, however, was entirely different. The Imperial task force was there, along with several TIEs.

Both A-wings kept their laser energy directed to their engines as they swerved in and out among Imperial task force craft. Positive IDs were eventually made on the ISDII *Corrupter*, the Dreadnaught *Vigilance*, the corvettes *Badlands* and *Malice*, the modified corvette *Kraken*, and the bulk cruiser *Cerberus*.

Complicating matters, the *Corrupter* began launching probe droids. Ace had instructions to destroy any of these he encountered. This meant he had to direct energy back to his lasers, reducing his speed: *that* meant the TIE fighters would have him and Blue Leader for lunch if he did not dispatch the probes quickly.

Not a single probe droid escaped Ace's lasers. All those hours of fighter training, and my invaluable offerings of knowledge, really paid off. Both A-wings escaped with minor damage.

The mission was successful. I had a feeling the future for the Imperial ships Ace identified wouldn't be pleasant.

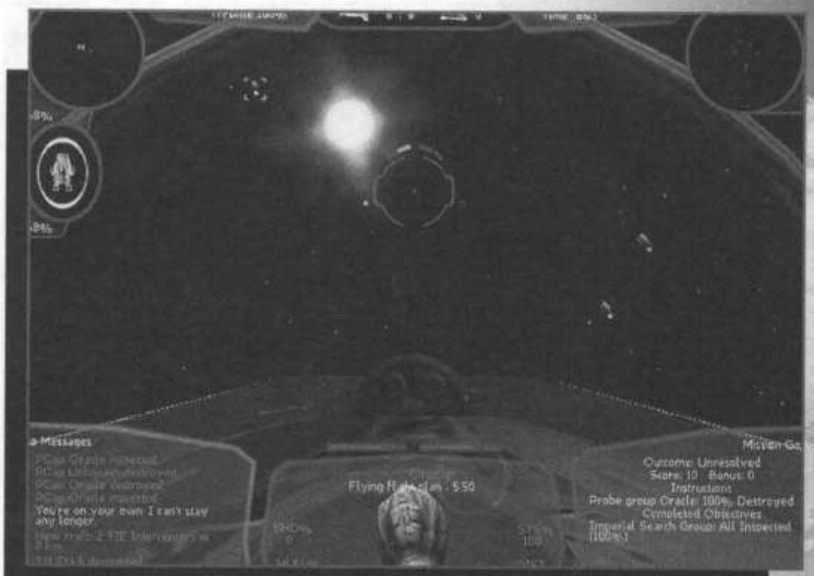


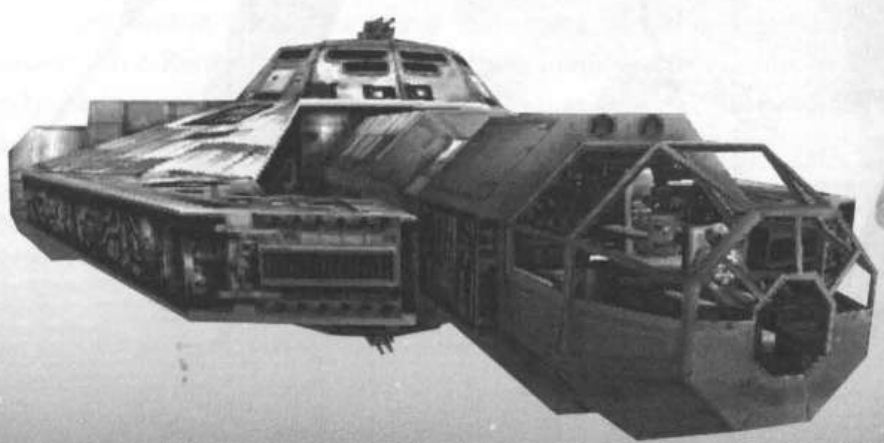
Fig. 7-4. Take all three out in one pass!

The Combat Simulation

As in many missions, there are two ways to get through this. The easy way is simply to hit [O], inspect everything it brings up until the probe capsules launch, and then use your missiles to take out the probe capsules. You'll probably want to turn your lasers off when the TIE interceptors start harassing you, so you can outrun them. Bug out as soon as you get a "Mission Complete" message.

The hard way involves taking out a Star Destroyer in an A-wing: it can be done, but it's far from easy! First, complete the mission the easy way, but save your missiles, using cannons to take out the probes. As soon as you've won, start drawing off the swarm of fighters chasing you. Set your recharge rates to lasers off, shields at maintenance, and run like heck! Once you have at least a 2.5 km lead on the nearest fighter, turn and go head-on just long enough to take out the nearest fighter. Then run like heck again! Do this until you've thinned out the main swarm to where you can dogfight normally.

When the main swarm is gone, turn your recharge rates to max and head toward the *Corrupter*. There will be more T/Is, but they never come at you more than four at a time, and you can always take out at least one in a head-on pass.



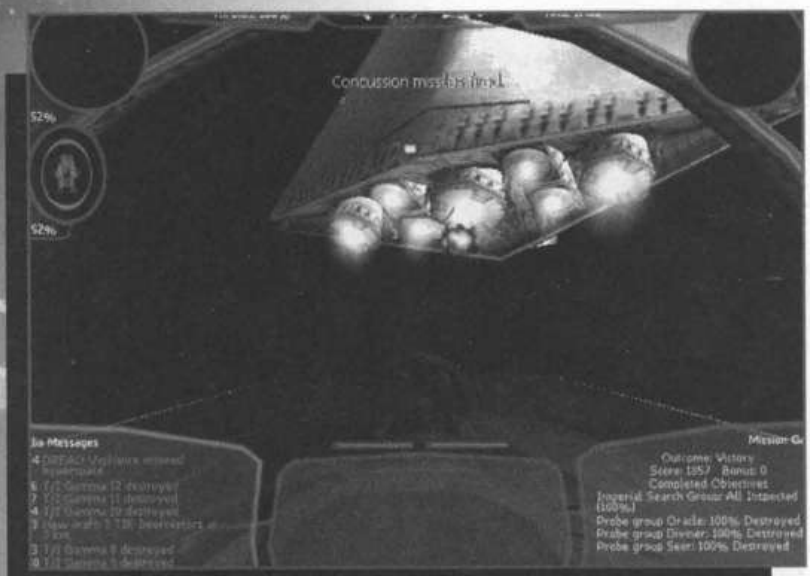


Fig. 7-5. Take out a Star Destroyer in an A-wing? If you dare ...

Once all the fighters are gone, your goal is to take out the *Corrupter*'s engines before it can reach its hyper point. Your missiles make this easier. Dumb-fire them from as far away as you can and still hit the engines. When your missiles are gone, turn both lasers and shields to increased, and close to cannon range to finish the job. The A-wing's superior maneuverability should enable you to dodge most laser fire. With its engines crippled, the *Corrupter* isn't going anywhere.

From there, it's just a matter of patiently taking out the shield generators and the hull. If only Ace had known.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to Search Area 1.

Search Area 1

- Hyper to Search Area 2.

Search Area 2

- Hyper to Search Area 3.

Search Area 3

- Inspect all capital ships.
- Destroy probe droids.
- Hyper to CRS *Defiance*.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rescue Echo Base Prisoners

A mission type of the highest priority to the Alliance is the rescue of political prisoners or slaves. This is commendable, but I have seen Rebel pilots blow right by an overworked maintenance droid without so much as a "Hello."

Alliance High Command responded fast to the report of captured Rebel Echo Base personnel being held within striking distance. Making the situation more critical, they were being transferred to a penal colony deep in Imperial territory. Rescue had to be attempted immediately.

Ace was X-wing Red 2 in a group of four assigned to cover six Y-wings that would disable the Dreadnaught *VTR-LX*, which held the POWs, as it refueled at a civilian spaceport. Ace was to protect the ATR that picked up the prisoners and escort it back to the CRS *Defiance*.

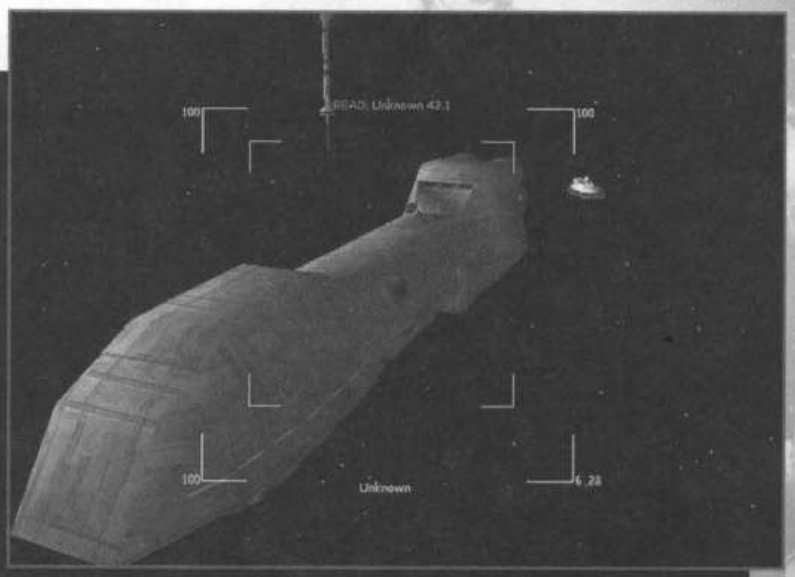


Fig. 7-6. The Dreadnaught *VTR-LX*

But things did not go so smoothly. When the Rebels arrived at the civilian spaceport, the Dreadnaught was already beginning departure procedures. Worse, four gunboats sat right in the Y-wings' path.

Ace raced to assist the Y-wings, but they had broken formation in response to the gunboats—costing the Rebels precious seconds. Gunboats are formidable foes and determined stalkers, and Ace and the other X-wings had their hands full protecting the scattered Y-wings. Because there were a number of civilian vessels in the area, Ace had to aim carefully.

A few proton torpedoes found their mark, but the Dreadnaught escaped into hyperspace. However, the Rebels had intercepted their jump vector coordinates, and all Rebel ships immediately made for the hyper buoy. Some Y-wings even reduced their shield energy levels for the extra speed: the chase was on!

Seconds later, the chase was over. Such is life in deep space. The coordinates lead the Rebels into the midst of an Imperial task force. The Imperials must not have expected the Rebels, because no TIE fighters were active. This allowed the Y-wings time to strike the Dreadnaught hard and disable it quickly. Now it was up to the ATRs. These arrived shortly and headed directly for the Dreadnaught to rescue the prisoners. Ace's X-wing group, along with the Y-wings, formed a protective shield around the Dreadnaught. They knew the Imperial frigates nearby would launch opposition soon.

Sure enough, the TIE fighters came—in waves, according to Ace. A tremendous furball ensued. The Rebels had to be careful not to inflict too much damage on the Dreadnaught. If it exploded, the prisoners, and the ATR crew, would die instantly.

Ace dueled multiple TIEs amidst rows of Imperial pressure tanks. Ace used the obstacles as shields and managed to destroy eight TIEs before the ATRs radioed they had the prisoners and required cover. It must have been frustrating to have to leave all those intact TIE fighters and TIE interceptors behind when the order was issued to leave the area. Good thing Emon was not there.

The TIE interceptors stayed on the Rebels' tails all the way to the hyper point, and inflicted a lot of damage to many Rebel ships. But it was hopeless for the Imperials by then: the prisoners were safely away.

The Combat Simulation

This mission is relatively straightforward. With the right combination of unbelievable luck and super-human skill, you might be able to take out the Dreadnaught's engines and prevent it from escaping the second region. But don't waste your time: if you actually managed to do it, you'd just have to start the mission over.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to POWs.

POWs

- Destroy gunboats.

Imperial Station

- Help bring down the Dreadnaught's shields.
- Prioritize the TIE bombers that attack ATR *Storm Unit*.
- Wait for ATR *Storm Unit* to finish docking.
- Hyper to CRS *Defiance*.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Recover Imperial Probe

Again, I piloted the *Otana* to the CRS *Defiance* to pick up Ace. And, again, he took over the cockpit without even an "Excuse me." Aeron needed Ace's assistance in obtaining a damaged Imperial probe droid reported in the Saila Na system. She could not reach the droid in time from where she was, but Ace could from his location. We would rendezvous later with Aeron and hand over the droid.

Ace and I hypered out of Alliance space to the coordinates Aeron had given us. The probe droid was there—and so was the Muurian transport *Pelican*, with six R-41 Starchasers as escort. The *Pelican* was a known pirate vessel, so I assumed the R-41s were pirates, too. It was obvious they were there for the probe droid.

After first closing the distance between us and the droid, Ace engaged the Starchasers, sending one spiraling out of control. I blew away the shields of another that passed within millimeters of us. As Ace neared the MUTR, I notified him that the pirates had docked with the probe: it was now in their possession.

Without hesitation, Ace attacked the transport carrying the droid. I, of course, simultaneously used the turret lasers to keep the R-41s at bay. Ace displayed amazing skill, accurately judging the amount of damage he inflicted on the transport while avoiding damage to the attached probe droid. As anticipated, the pirate transport dropped the probe droid and focused on saving itself.

But again Ace accurately calculated the distance between the probe droid and the transport and began a devastating volley of laser blasts into the transport's engine section. The pirate vessel came to a halt and began exhibiting internal explosions.

The remaining Starchaser attempted to get the droid while we were preoccupied with the transport. I guess its pilot was unaware that the *Otana* had a Kalibac Industries MK-09 maintenance droid sitting in the turret. I aimed; he paid.

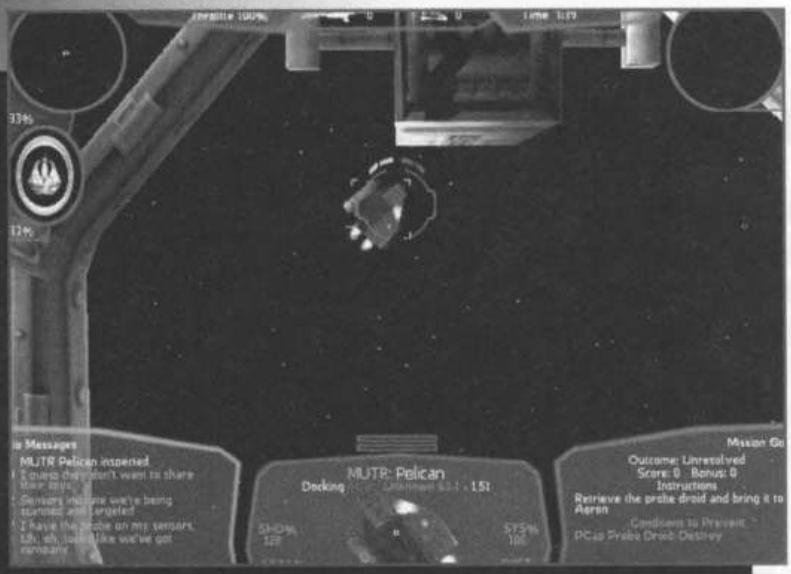


Fig. 7-7. Taking Care of the *Pelican*

Ace moved in and grabbed the Imperial probe droid. Now we had to make it through a civilian customs checkpoint to reach Aeron. This would require precise timing.

When the customs checkpoint platforms came up on the CMD, so did a group of planetary fighters and two Marauder corvettes. The customs official ordered us to stop our engines and prepare to be boarded. Ace slowed the *Otana*, but never to a full stop. He hoped to gain a little more distance before making a run for the hyper buoy out.

Suddenly, several small objects emerged from hyperspace—a group of hostile, pirate Y-wings. They attacked the civilian cargo station and everything else in their range, including the *Otana*. Ace ordered me to the turret and engaged the pirate ships. It was a heck of a fight! I managed to destroy several torpedoes targeted at us, and Ace ripped through the ships with deadly laser fire.

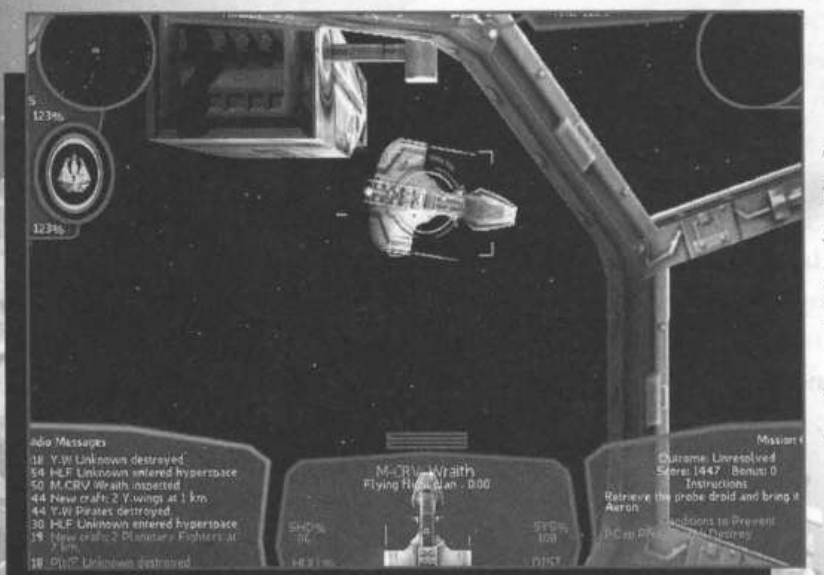


Fig. 7-8. The turret is the best weapon against capital ships.

When the fight was over, the officials thanked us and waved us through customs unmolested. Ace's luck held. We met Aeron as planned, docked, and headed back to the *Defiance*.

The war against the Empire was escalating, and Ace had a job to do. He was a Rebel pilot.

The Combat Simulation

As usual, there are a couple of different ways you can handle this mission. The easiest is to run in with everything dumped to engines, grab the probe, and get out. You might have to do a little shooting with the autoturret to keep the R-41s off your back, but for the most part it's a simple grab-and-run.

You can more or less avoid the pirate attack at the customs station, as well, although you might have to shoot a torpedo or two. Remember, this only works if you're going as fast as you possibly can.

The more obvious option can be more difficult, but it's by no means daunting. Make sure you prioritize the Muurian transport *Pelican*: it's trying to steal the probe, as well. If it picks up the probe, you must damage its shields to below 50 percent to make it release it. (Its pilot doesn't want the probe destroyed any more than you do.) To help repel the raid on the customs checkpoint, make sure you release the probe before engaging in combat, or it will be destroyed. Remember to use the turret on the Marauder corvettes.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to the probe droid.

Probe Droid

- Attack Muurian transport *Pelican*, using [E] and the autoturret when necessary to keep the R-41s off your back.
- Finish off the R-41s.
- Pick up the probe droid.
- Hyper to Tinoon Customs Station.

Tinoon Customs Station.

- Release the probe droid.
- Focus on the Y-wings that attack you.
- Destroy all Y-wings.
- Destroy Marauder corvettes using the turret.
- Pick up the probe droid when all attackers are gone.
- Hyper to Aeron.

Aeron

- Fly within 1 km of CORT *Sabra*.
- Release the probe droid.
- Wait for CORT *Sabra* to dock with the probe.
- Hyper to CRS *Defiance* or quit.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Stop Resupply of ISD Corrupter

Not long after Ace returned from the probe droid mission, the call to scramble was issued. The Alliance had received reports that an Imperial Nebulon B frigate *Monitor* was leading a supply convoy to the ISDII *Corrupter*. The convoy carried hyperdrive parts for the *Corrupter*, which had been badly damaged during the battle for Hoth.

The *Corrupter* must be kept crippled, and so the Rebels had to destroy the convoy.

An ambush would take place in the Bettel asteroid drift, through which the convoy must pass. Ace was assigned to B-wing Green. Red and Blue groups comprised X-wings and A-wings to protect the B-wings and engage intervening enemy starfighters. All Rebel pilots had instructions to watch for and destroy any shuttles attempting to flee the *Monitor*: they surely would carry a team of skilled repair technicians destined for the *Corrupter*.

Later, Ace remarked that he was nervous on this mission. He had hoped to log in a few more hours in the B-wing before participating in a large engagement. After reviewing the records, I believe Alliance High Command had no other option. Due to heavy losses at Hoth, good Rebel pilots were few.

As they emerged from hyperspace, the Rebel ambush team was greeted immediately by Imperial gunboats. Ace bore straight toward the Imperial frigate *Monitor*. After all, what were the X-wings there for?

Soon, the blue trails of Rebel warheads sliced through the void and impacted on the vulnerable convoy vessels with devastating accuracy. Huge explosions erupted everywhere. And Ace was right in the middle. His B-wing was not as fast or maneuverable as other craft, but it packed a heavy punch.

But while he was distracted by all the pretty lights, the FRG *Monitor* entered hyperspace. If *I* had come along, I could have calculated its estimated departure time when we arrived, and told Ace to fly faster.

Ace turned to help finish off the rest of the convoy, and managed to disable and destroy CTRNS *Vo* just as it was about to escape. Once the area was clear, the Rebel force headed for the *Corrupter*'s last known coordinates. At Ace's suggestion, the B-wings turned their attention to the *Monitor* and began pounding it with everything they had. Ace, though, had noticed that four shuttles had slipped through the mayhem, headed out of the sector. Ace took off in pursuit.

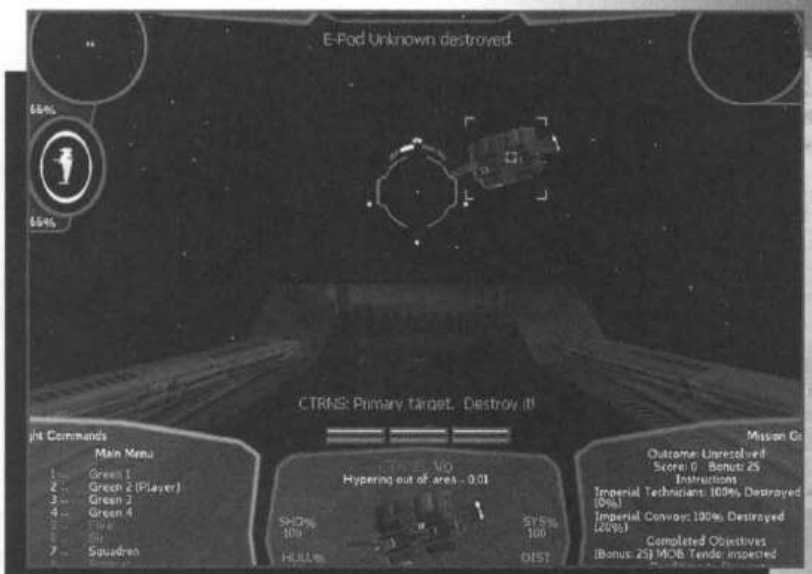


Fig. 7-9. *Vo* is about to go.

He caught up. Extremely accurate laser fire was needed at that moment, and Ace had it. He destroyed all four shuttles in quick succession.

Ace returned to the convoy—and the TIE interceptors and bombers the *Corrupter* had launched. The X-wings and A-wings had reduced their numbers by now, so Ace took out only one TIE bomber before focusing again on the *Monitor*.

For some reason Ace could not recall anything after that, only that the fight ended "in a sudden dead silence." My research reveals that Ace was credited with having destroyed the Nebulon B frigate *Monitor*, four Imperial shuttles, one Mobquet transport, the Xiy/T *Tilark*, the CTRNS *Vo*, one TIE interceptor, and one TIE bomber.

All in a day's work.

The Combat Simulation

There are several ways to get through this mission, depending on how aggressive you are in destroying the *Monitor*, the container transport, and the two Xiytiar transports before they can escape to the *Corrupter*'s region. If you can stop them, you can end the mission and never see the *Corrupter*, greatly reducing the overall danger.

Send your wingmates after CTRNS *Vo*, while you focus on the frigate, dumping everything to engines and dumb-firing your torps into its engines from about 8 km range. Press the attack, and try as hard as you can to disable the vessel. Once it's out of commission (or gone), go after the *Vo* and the two Xiytiar transports.

Generally, however, you'll have to deal with both enemy regions. If the *Monitor* makes it to the second region, it will start launching shuttles 40 seconds after you arrive. At this point, you can either destroy the *Monitor* or wait for it to launch a shuttle every 30 seconds. It's much harder to face all the TIEs that will show up as you wait than it is to destroy the frigate, especially if you remembered to save your torpedoes.

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to ambush.

Ambush

- Try to stop the FRG *Monitor*, the Xiytiar transports, and the CTRNS *Vo* from leaving the region.
- Finish off anything left.
- Hyper to the Mev system.

Fig. 7-10. Catching the FRG *Monitor* is difficult, but rewarding.

Mev System

- Finish off the *Monitor* before it launches shuttles.
- Destroy any shuttles the FRG manages to launch.
- Destroy any freighters that got past you at the ambush.
- Hyper to the CRS *Defiance*.

CRS Defiance

- Enter hangar or quit.

Destroy Imperial Sensor Net

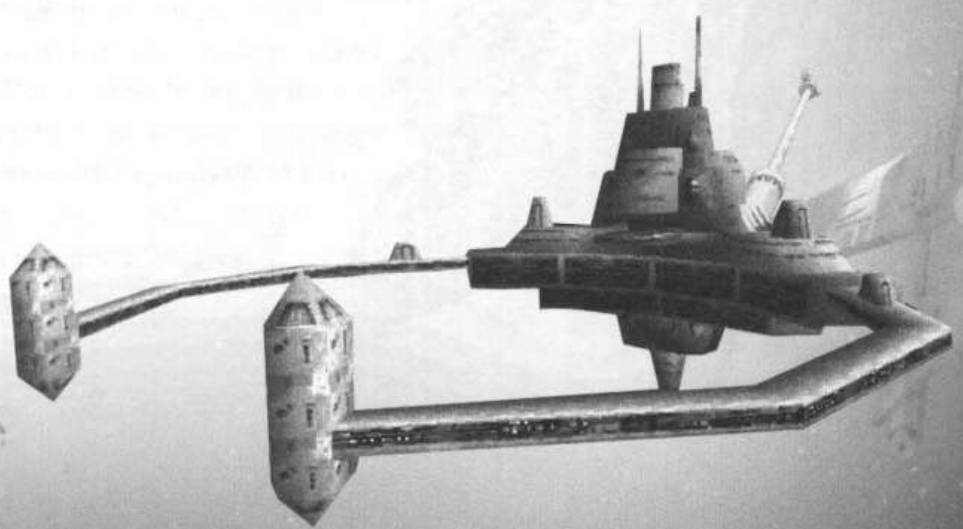
One did not have to join the Rebellion to know the Empire was tightening its grip on the galaxy. The Alliance was still reeling from the disaster at Hoth, and needed more time to rally forces strong enough to defeat the Empire. To accomplish this, the Rebels had to move their current fleet through the Empire's web of control before they were crushed.

A vital aspect of the Empire's encircling web was the Sensor Array Network System, a vast network of satellites linked by Imperial sensor arrays and sensor control stations. The weakened Rebel fleet was trapped, and soon would be found by superior Imperial forces. They had no choice but to attempt escape through a hole in the sensor network.

It was Ace's job to make that hole—well, Ace and five other X-wings ... and six B-wings. I suppose I should mention the ATR group "Cloak," too. The ATR's task was to jam the station's communications long enough for Ace and his lot to knock out the sensor control station, sensor array, and 18 satellites. This would enable the Rebel fleet to slip through undetected. The Imperials would think it was just another annoying Rebel raid—unless, of course, an Imperial vessel escaped to summon reinforcements. More critical still was not allowing the Rebel fleet to be detected.

Ace wasn't about to let that happen. Often he has said he was more intensely focused during this mission than any previous one. He was not going to let a single Imperial ship get away intact.

The Rebel attack team emerged from hyperspace in a respectable formation. The B-wings wasted no time turning their headings toward the sensor control station. They wanted to knock that structure out quickly, and hopefully prevent most of the station's full complement of Imperial starfighters from being activated.



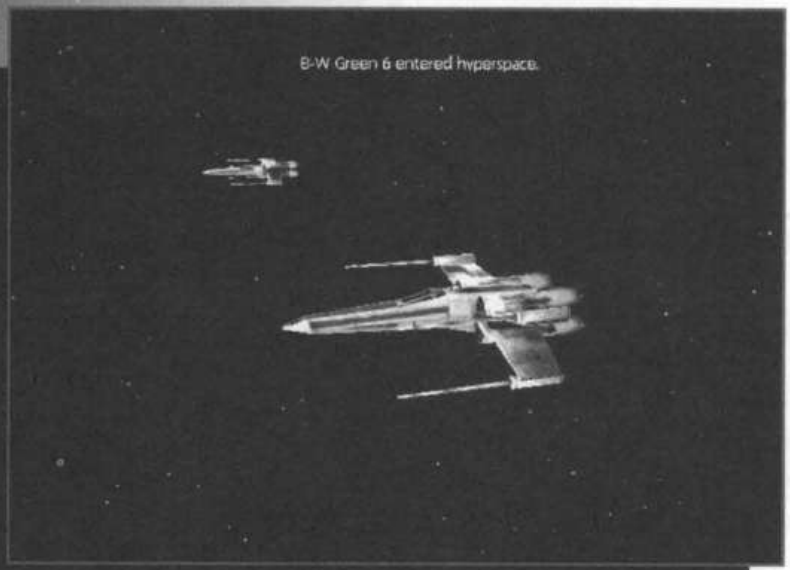


Fig. 7-11. It is always nice to work with professionals.

I would not have placed any bets on that plan, but there was no telling a Rebel pilot that.

The Imperials were not entirely unprepared for this attack. TIE bombers and interceptors were patrolling when the Rebels arrived. But Ace realized at once the Imperial pilots were green: they did not concentrate available forces on the B-wings first. Still, there were enough TIEs to force B-wing Group to approach the station in a less favorable formation.

The sensor control station, greatly damaged (but not devastated) by the first volley of Rebel warheads, launched the remainder of its starfighters. TIE fighters, bombers, and interceptors (six each) swarmed the sector.

For Ace, that meant the battle just got better. It is an Azzameen thing.

Before the station exploded, an Imperial shuttle carrying the station crew attempted escape. But the shuttle pilot chose the worst possible path for its escape—a head-on course with the craziest Rebel pilot in the galaxy—Ace Azzameen.

Ace fired on the shuttle as the ships rushed straight at each other, blazing away. Ace realized he was not doing damage fast enough to destroy the shuttle before it swept past him and hit hyperdrive. He had only one alternative, he later told me: "I had to ram the sucker!"

Do you think, for one minute, that he considered the possibility of his own demise using this tactic, full shields or not? The impact that would have had on his family? Sometimes I just want to discharge 3,000 volts into that boy.

But it worked. His X-wing was ready for the compactor at this point. Luckily, his wingmates had dispatched the remaining TIEs.

The Rebel fleet slipped through the Empire's network undetected. The Imperials searched briefly for the Rebels responsible, but never got close. The fleet was safely away into the Outer Rim Territories. For the time being.

Fig. 7-12. The shuttle *Jev* tries to escape.

The Combat Simulation

Your wingmates are competent in this mission, and will take care of most mission goals if you keep the fighters busy. Avoid targeting the weapon emplacements; they'll shoot missiles at you if you do. Pay close attention to the TIE bombers, although you needn't go after them yourself if you can spare a wingmate or two. The shuttle *Jev* launches from the station soon before it's destroyed. It's not difficult to run it down, as long as you notice its arrival.

CR5 Defiance

- Hyper to the sensor station.

Sensor Station

- Destroy the weapon emplacements.
- Send wingmates after the bombers.
- Dogfight until SHU *Jev* appears.
- Inspect and destroy SHU *Jev*.
- Finish off remaining fighters.
- Enter hangar or quit.

Chapter 8
Secret Weapons of the Empire

Flight Staff Transfer

Alliance High Command had been hearing some strange reports. They received the first with humor, but as more flowed in, the Rebels adopted a serious tone: experimental Imperial starfighters? Not beyond comprehension.

The reports all came from independent transport vessels, which rightly deserved a cautious reception. They could, after all, be sources of Imperial misinformation. Ace had never seen any new starfighters, nor had any other Rebel pilot.

This was about to change.

Ace finally got another chance to fly an A-wing as part of an escort group that was to escort the SHU *Oceana* ferrying the Rebel flight staff to the CRS *Liberty*—a routine transfer. The *Liberty* would be Ace's new home. The TRN group "Azure" went along for the ride, carrying the Rebel pilots' equipment.

The first destination lay in the Belat system. From there, the flight would continue to the *Liberty*. Routine.

The flight arrived in the Belat system as scheduled. They regrouped, scanned the sector, and were about to continue when a distress call came in from a nearby location: a convoy claimed to be under attack by unknown Imperial starfighters.

A-wing Blue 1 and Blue 2 (Ace) were ordered to respond and "check it out." One does not have to tell Ace twice to head for the action. He was gone.

Ace emerged from hyperspace and assessed the situation. It was not pretty. The Xiy/T *Calico* and its company of Star Galleons, MOBs, and cargo ferries were under attack from, and in danger of being overwhelmed by, a large group of peculiar Imperial craft.

"They were odd-looking things," Ace remarked. "I had never seen anything like them before. Perhaps these were the experimental TIEs we have been hearing about."

I let Ace believe he had amazing powers of deduction.

It does not take an A-wing long to get to the action, especially with Ace at the controls. He has always had a weird habit of keeping energy shifted to the engines until the very last second, and then putting laser energy to its maximum for combat.

Of utmost importance was preventing any convoy ships from being destroyed. Ace also wanted to ID the "odd-looking things" for Headquarters. Diving into the middle of the swarm was the best approach for accomplishing both goals, he decided.

Sounded like an Emon tactic to me.

Surprisingly, it worked. The experimental TIEs were identified (T/e1s) and their attack formation disrupted. This probably saved one or two convoy vessels. Nothing could save all the vulnerable CN/B containers.

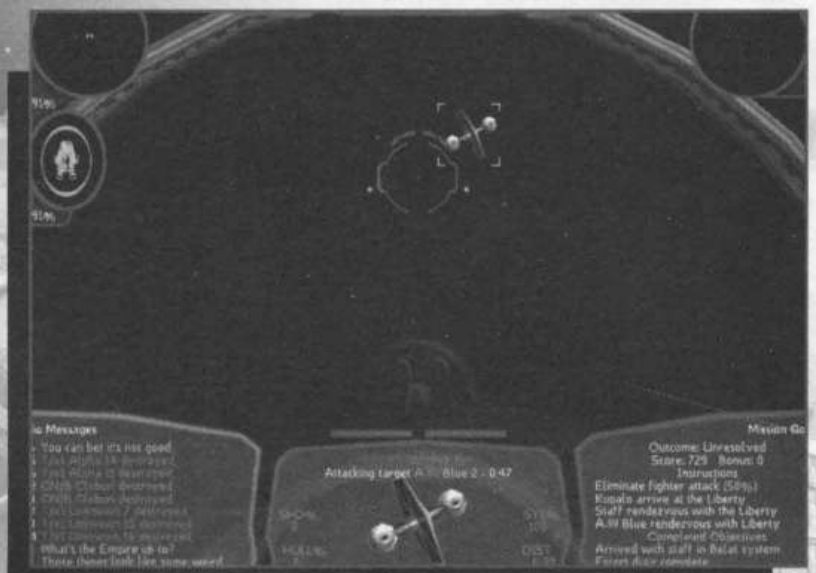


Fig. 8-1. Odd-Looking Things

Ace and Blue 1 used their warheads and lasers so efficiently, the experimental TIEs were but fodder. Ace later commented he had thought it strange how the TIEs worked so tightly together, yet seemed to possess no "common sense" or instinctive behavior. This, he believed, made it much easier to defeat them, even though TIEs outnumbered A-wings eight to one.

Ace also identified the ETR *Suluk*, but there was no time to inspect it thoroughly before it was destroyed. My guess was he was too busy blasting it to run a thorough check. After its destruction, Ace noted, the TIEs behavior pattern changed drastically. They seemed disorganized. It was a mop-up operation at that point.

The convoy was saved, except for a few cargo containers and some damage to the MOBs and Star Galleons. Back at the *Liberty*, Ace was credited with 11 T/e1 starfighters and the ETR *Suluk* (I *knew* it!).

The Combat Simulation

Winning this mission is simply a matter of staying alive. The experimental TIE fighters are armed with forward-fixed turbolasers. They don't trigger your threat indicators, so pay special attention to your wingmate's warnings about the proximity of enemy craft. Focus on the TIEs that attack the convoy. (Use the map to help determine which they are.) Stay away from the escort transport; A-wings aren't equipped to take out transport vessels. (If you simply must try it, be sure most of the TIEs are gone first, and then dumb-fire your concussion missiles in a series of rapid passes.)

CRS Defiance

- Hyper to the Belat system.

Belat System

- Hyper to distress call.

Distress Call

- Destroy the TIE e/1s that target convoy.
- Finish the remaining TIE e/1s.
- Let the ETR go.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

MOB Clobun Freight 5 destroyed
Radio Messages
I thought the Defiance was sending its best.
You let those people perish.
Mission objectives cannot be finished, abort mission
MOB Clobun Freight 5 destroyed
Flying flight plan . 5:94
Completed Objectives
Arrived with staff in Belat system

Fig. 8-2. You'll be much happier if you leave it alone.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Ensnare Imperial Prototypes

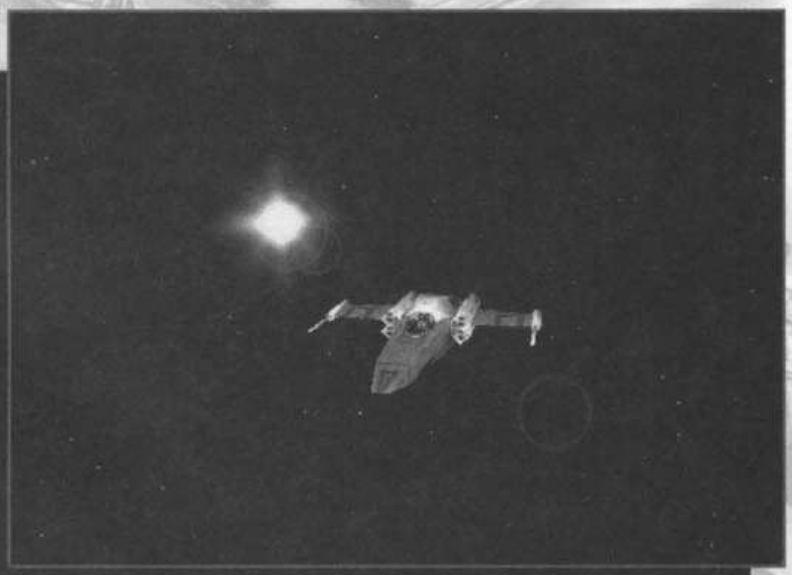


Fig. 8-3. Ah, the Z-95. You have got to love that feeling of power.

With the information Ace brought back from the previous mission, Alliance High Command was anxious to lay hands on one of the experimental TIE fighters. A plan was conceived.

Ace was to fly a Z-95 Headhunter, outfitted with new ion pulse warheads for quick disabling, as one of a group of six (to disguise their Rebel identity). The Z-95s would then appear as independent escorts for a mock cargo

convoy designated "Sulin". High Command hoped this convoy would lure the experimental Imperial TIEs into an engagement. Ace and his Rebel pals then would disable as many new TIEs as possible. The Heavy Lifter *Atlas* would arrive to pick them up.

All went according to the plan: Ace's pack of Z-95s met the convoy and waited. There were 12 Mobquet transport decoys in the convoy, all computer-controlled to avoid unnecessary loss of human lives. (I am surprised they did not put droids in the transports.)

Ace did not have to wait long. Out of hyperspace came two large groups of TIE experimental starfighters, just as HQ had hoped. With them were two ETRs later identified as the *Suluk 1* and *Suluk 2*.

The Z-95 Headhunter is less maneuverable than a standard Rebel fighter, but in the hands of a pilot like Ace, it was enough. Ace's group responded to the intruders and attacked immediately. Ace was sharp enough to close with the TIEs and get ID on the CMD. He discovered two types—TIEs T/e2 and T/e3. The T/e2, Ace recalled, looked like a normal TIE fighter, but had twin turbo lasers mounted on the side panels. The T/e3 resembled a TIE interceptor with missile launchers mounted on the side panels. Both ships reached speeds of 100, with the T/e3 slightly faster. The Z-95s had no advantage here.

The new ion pulse warheads proved invaluable. Ace disabled two T/e2s and three T/e3s himself. Given the other Z-95s, the sector was soon filled with floating, disabled TIE craft of both types.

Ace did not ignore the ETRs. He remembered the effect it had had on the experimental TIEs when the escorting ETRs were destroyed. He quickly caught up with one and disabled it as he had the TIEs. The second ETR, already severely damaged, was destroyed instantly.

When it was all over, the convoy suffered only one loss. Twelve disabled experimental TIEs awaited pickup by the arriving heavy lifters. The lifters grabbed one disabled ship each: the ETR, an T/e2, and an T/e3. Then they headed back to the *Liberty*. The other Z-95s followed the heavy lifters. Typically, Ace stayed in the area long enough to use the remaining disabled craft for target practice, destroying them all.

It was probably this that secured Ace a new ranking when he returned to the *Liberty*—Lieutenant Junior Grade.

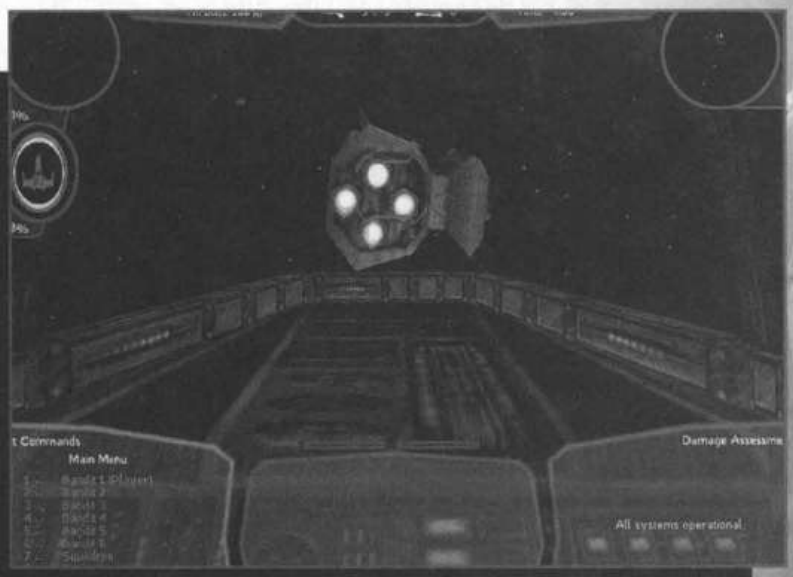


Fig. 8-4. That is a dangerous area!

The Combat Simulation

As unlikely an ETR killer as the A-wing is, the Z-95 is that much more so. This mission should give you little trouble, however, if you make judicious use of the Flight Orders MFD. Just as you enter the ambush region, go to the map and send a wingmate to disable one of each type of experimental TIE. Save your ion pulse torpedoes and destroy any TIEs that attack you.

Once all the TIEs are disabled, tell your entire squadron to disable the nearest ETR. Let them bring its shields down as much as they can, and then hit it with dual ion pulses: be wary of proximity damage. Repeat for the second ETR, and then it's just a matter of waiting for the heavy lifters to finish their job.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the ambush.

Ambush

- Send wingmates to disable one of each fighter type.
- Once all fighters are disabled, have your entire squadron help you disable the nearest ETR.
- Use the same procedure to disable the remaining ETR.
- Wait for HLF *Atlas* to escape with disabled craft.
- Destroy all remaining disabled craft.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Kill K'Armyn Viraxo

Having lost Tomaas and Galin, the Azzameens were ripe for revenge on the Viraxos. According to Uncle Antan, that opportunity was at hand. Antan called a family meeting (Aeron communicated remotely; she was elsewhere) to exchange news and conceive a plan.

Of course, this meant I would have to make another boring trip to get Ace. Do not get me wrong, Ace and I are like energy and lasers—we work quite well together. But by now I was becoming less and less thrilled with shuttle duty.

I did not give Ace a chance to be rude this time. I offered him the controls of the *Otana* as soon as he came aboard.

His response?

"Naw, you drive. I'll catch some Zs."

My temper circuits almost melted.

I "drove" us back to Azzameen headquarters, where Antan gave Ace and Emon the plan: ambush the head of the Viraxo family, K'Armyn Viraxo, while he was abroad. Simple and sweet, as Emon would put it. Although Aeron agreed some form of revenge was due, she expressed distaste for Uncle Antan's plan. She was about to say more when communications with her failed. Odd.

Ace and I followed Emon to the hyper buoy and on to *Dresteg II* resort facility. As we emerged from hyperspace, we saw that we were far from alone. Besides the facility itself, there were a Star Galleon, a passenger liner, three bulk freighters, and three Xiytiar transports.

Ace and Emon tried to "blend in," as Emon expressed it, until K'Armyn Viraxo's yacht arrived. I was about to tell Emon this would be impossible to achieve, considering the sensor equipment the other vessels had on board, but I never got the chance.

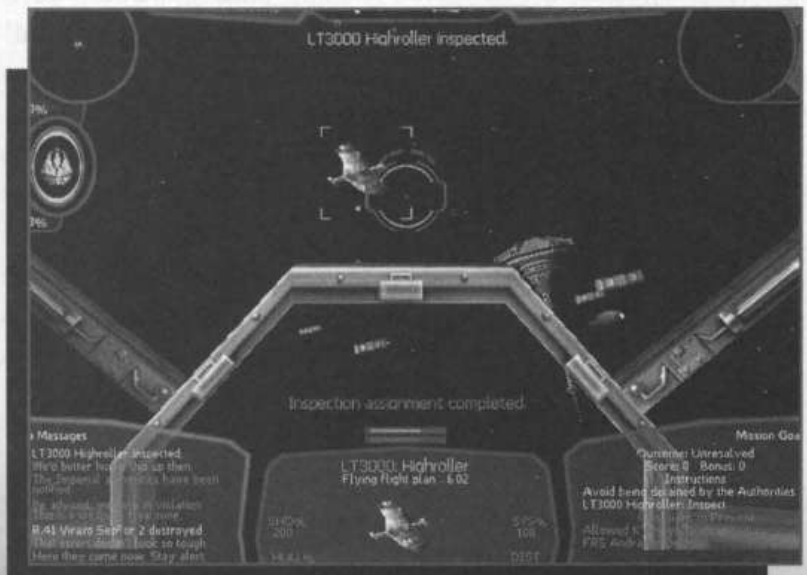
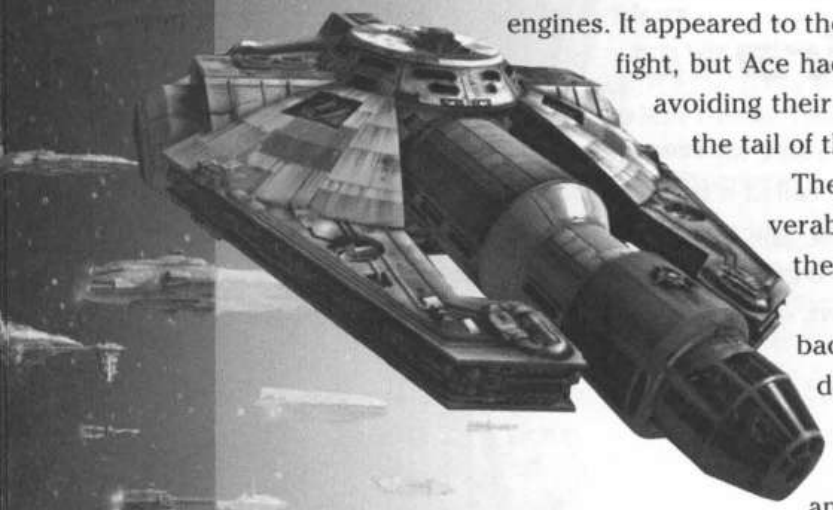


Fig. 8-5. The *Highroller*—if you can not get the man, at least you can trash his ride.

K'Armyn Viraxo's LT-3000 luxury yacht, the *Highroller*, arrived accompanied by six R-41 Starchasers. Ace and Emon moved quickly and headed straight for the yacht. The escorting Starchasers formed a screen between us and the yacht: these were *not* novice pilots.



Ace turned the *Otana* toward the fighter screen and transferred energy to the engines. It appeared to the Starchasers that Ace was engaging them in a dogfight, but Ace had other ideas. He blew through the fighter screen, avoiding their lasers, and maintained a high speed directly onto the tail of the luxury yacht. Very clever.

The Starfighters had throttled down for greater maneuverability, and this put some distance between Ace and them. I was proud.

Ace caught up to the yacht, shifted energy back to the lasers, and blasted that LT-3000 into space debris. By now, however, other foes had entered the fray. The MUTRs were firing on Emon, as were six Z-95 Headhunters. The pilots of the Z-95s announced themselves as bounty hunters with a contract on Azzameens. That did not go over well with Emon and Ace.

The Azzameen brothers instantly changed focus to the Z-95s, even though three Starchasers out there were still trying to get a bead on us. I tried my best to keep the other ships off the *Otana*'s rear, but there were simply too many lasers, and we took a couple of jolting hits.

Once they had eliminated the loud-mouthed bounty hunters, Ace and Emon wasted not a millisecond in going on the offensive against the others. I reminded them Imperial security forces could arrive at any moment, but they ignored me. It did not take them long to destroy three R-41 Starchasers.

Inevitably, the Imperials arrived, and Ace had the sense to suggest our departure. Emon ordered us out, but not before we had all taken Imperial hits. Had they listened to me ....

When Ace, Emon, and I returned to the temporary Azzameen headquarters, Uncle Antan apologized for having sent us into a trap. Evidently, his sources had been compromised. I would have to agree. Although K'Armyn Viraxo was not aboard the yacht, I believe Ace and Emon were content.

The Combat Simulation

Taking out the R-41s and the luxury yacht shouldn't prove much of a challenge. If the Z-95s give you trouble, remember that the autoturret is very good at clearing out fragile fighters in a hurry (having flown the Z-95, you know it qualifies as fragile). As always, jumping to the turret is the best way to handle transport-class vessels such as MUTRs. Of course, it's unnecessary to destroy the bounty hunters, but why wouldn't you want to?

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the *Destreg II* resort facility.

Destreg II

- Inspect Luxury Yacht 3000 *Highroller*.
- Destroy or disable R-41s.
- Destroy ambushing Z-95s and MUTRs.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Raid Production Facility

The new experimental Imperial TIEs received a lot of attention at Alliance High Command headquarters. A raid was organized that they hoped would disrupt the Empire's production of these new fighters.

Ace was assigned one of four X-wings in the raiding group. His task was to destroy the static defenses protecting the Imperial C/F1 production facility. Two A-wings went along as cover for the X-wings and ATR *Storm Unit*, which was ordered to board the facility and retrieve data relating to the experimental TIE project.

The assault group hyperspaced to the coordinates of the planet Nomlis III in the Kurdin system. The production facility was there, orbiting peacefully, when Ace and the others arrived. Ace's group broke formation, each targeting one of the static defenses—the gun emplacements—as ordered. Standard TIE fighters patrolling the base moved to intercept.

The production facility responded quickly, launching waves of experimental TIE fighters types T/e1 and T/e3—far too many for the A-wings to handle alone. Ace destroyed his target (a large gun emplacement) amazingly fast and turned to help the A-wings. Soon joined by the other X-wings, the Rebels tore into the experimental TIEs. The T/e3s, however, were their prime objects, due to their two attached eight-missile launchers.

ATR *Storm Unit* stealthily skirted the intense furball and successfully boarded the facility. The Rebels now had to buy the ATR time and, soon, cover its escape.

Ace was well aware the facility had notified Imperial forces nearby and was itching to take that big eyesore out of the picture. I suppose this was what inspired him to fight so feverishly: he destroyed three T/e3s and four T/e1s!

The ATR then made a welcome call: "We got what we came for. Bugging out."

As if on cue, an Imperial force of TIE defenders emerged from hyperspace. But it was too late for the Imperials. Ace turned toward them and disrupted their formation, giving the ATR the distance it needed to escape into hyperspace.

As anyone who knew Ace could have predicted, he remained behind, dueling with the defenders until the other Rebel ships all escaped safely.

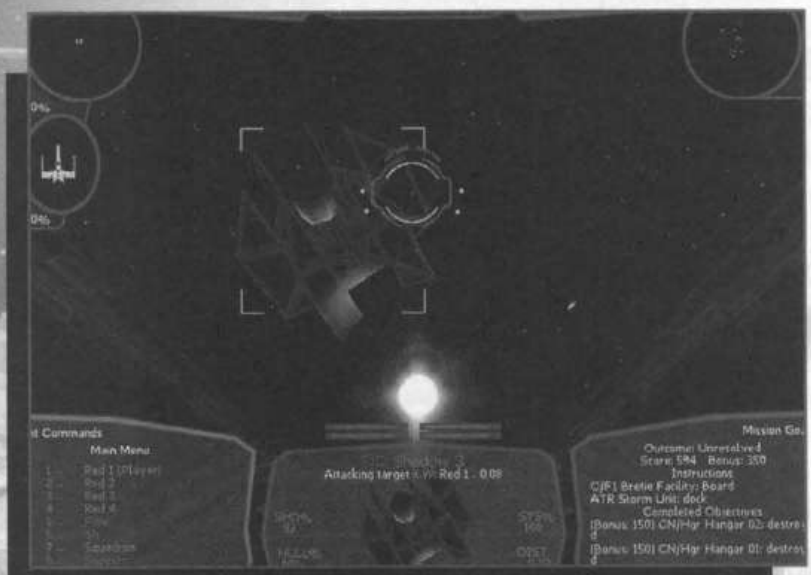


Fig. 8-6. The Empire's Best

I am pleased and proud to tell you Ace made it out safely, too. His awarded credits listed no TIE defenders, but I suspect a couple did not make it back to the Empire.

The Combat Simulation

This mission can be made vastly less difficult if you and a few of your wingmates take out the two container hangars right at the beginning. This prevents most of the experimental TIEs from ever launching. Be on the lookout for TIE defender Shadow. This group of four T/Ds will tear your wingmates apart if you don't notice their arrival.

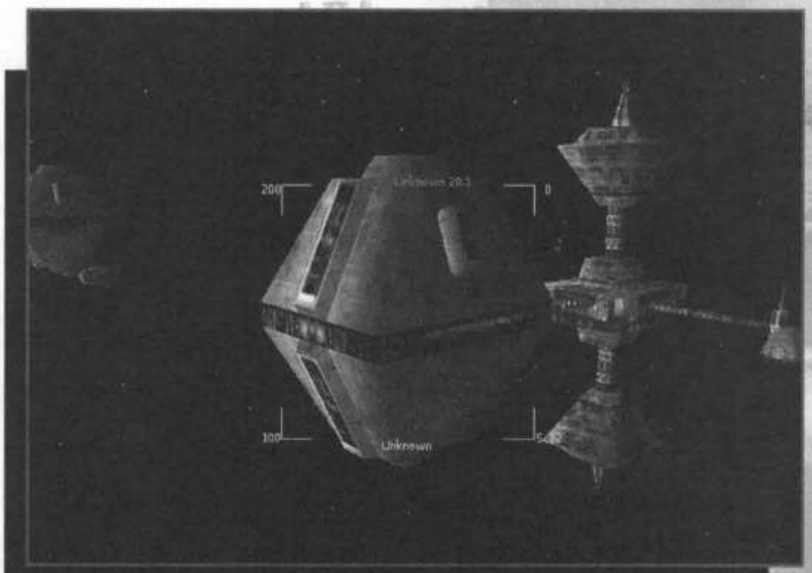


Fig. 8-7. Take out these hangars to save yourself much pain.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the production facility.

Production Facility

- Order two wingmates to attack target type CN/Hgr.
- Clear fighter screen and gun platforms.
- Destroy T/D Shadow.
- Bring *Bretie Facility* down to 1 or 2 percent hull while the ATR is still docked.
- When ATR finishes docking, destroy the facility and everything around it. Trash the place.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Defend CRS Liberty

Ace hardly had returned from his last mission before the alarm sounded: a large force of experimental TIEs was attacking the *Liberty*!

Ace jumped into the cockpit of an X-wing, and with eight others shot out of the hangar and into the fight. Four A-wings already had engaged, and Ace noted a flight of B-wings joining in. Then a couple of Rebel ATRs appeared.

It would be a big one!

Ace used the CMD to locate the most threatening enemy ships and targeted an oncoming T/e4. There were e3s and e5s in the area, too, but the new e4s literally were flying bombs—*fast* flying bombs—headed right for the *Liberty*.

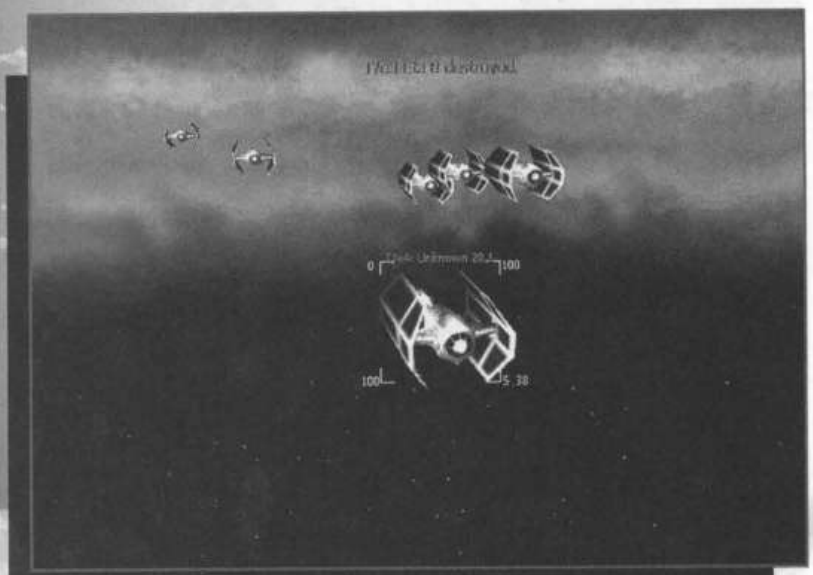


Fig. 8-8. Fast flying bombs can ruin anyone's day.

Ace chose to attack the e4s head-on; they were so fast, he might not get a good shot otherwise. With his laser energy at maximum, Ace took out two in the head-on pass. Then he shifted energy to the engines and turned to get the others before they hit the *Liberty*.

Ace got another e4, but the last one slammed into the *Liberty* with a tremendous explosion. Ace turned his attention to the type e3s, which sported 16 missiles launchers mounted on either side. The wave of TIE e4s already had struck at the *Liberty* once, and were trying their best to slip past the Rebel fighters for another run.

It was not to be. The other Rebel pilots had done their job well, too. The sector was, for a few precious moments, peaceful. Then came the second Imperial wave: again, a large group of mixed experimental TIEs sped toward the wounded *Liberty*.

Trying to stop a large, dedicated wave of extremely fast assault vessels is no walk in the park. When I first downloaded the records of this encounter, I was saddened. More than once a Rebel pilot intentionally sacrificed his or her life to prevent damage to the CRS *Liberty*. Acts of bravery were numerous that day.

The bravery paid off. The assault failed. There were regrettable losses, but not as many as there could have been.

Ace had taken more hits and damage than he ever had, barely landing his X-wing intact.
It was a good day for heroes.
It was a bad day for the Empire.

The Combat Simulation

The key to this mission is to stop the T/e4s from completing their kamikaze runs on the *Liberty*. Look for them on the map, and have your wingmates attack that target type. You'll reach a point where you must dogfight with attacking experimentals, but never forget that the T/e4s are your main targets.

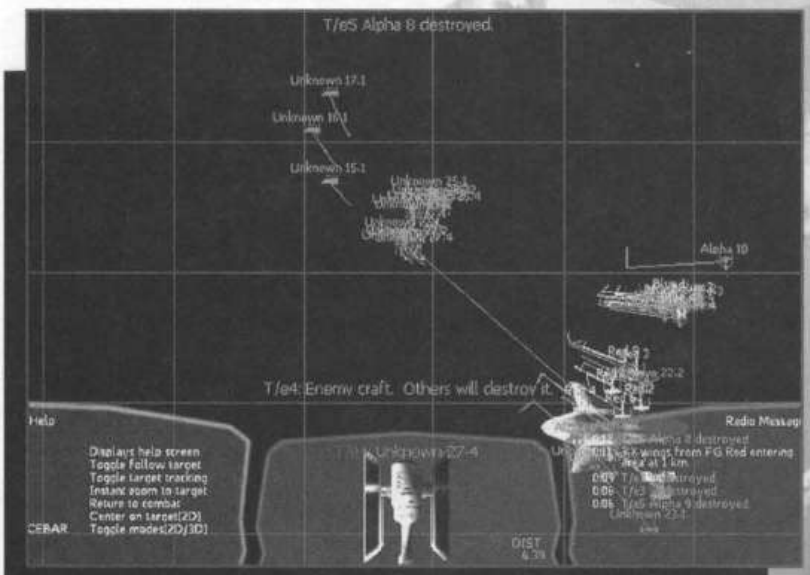


Fig. 8-9. The map has never been more useful.

CRS Liberty

- Immediately go to map and find T/e4s. Have squadron help you take them all out.
- Engage fighters until next wave hypers in.
- Again, find T/e4s and have wingmates go after them. Beware the craft specifically targeting you.
- Clear fighters until the next wave arrives; get the kamikaze TIEs again.
- Clear all fighters. If you're damaged, stay away from the ETRs, although it's good to inspect them if you can.
- Enter hangar or quit once all enemy craft are destroyed.

Destroy Imperial Research Facility

The Alliance had had enough of the experimental TIE fighters. Something permanent had to be done.

That something was an all-out assault on the main Imperial research and production facility. Orders were to destroy any and all Imperial vessels or structures in the sector.

Simple and to the point.

The attacking force consisted of X-wing Red Group for space superiority. B-wing Green Group, equipped with 12 torpedoes, would attack the structures. Ace was assigned to the B-wings. I imagine that made him happy: he could inflict a lot more damage.

The assault force left the CRS *Liberty* in high spirits and engaged hyperdrives a united and determined force.

The Imperials were not expecting such an assault. This was evident by the dearth of fighters and the Stormtrooper transports hovering casually about.

Ace and his B-wing group made a direct course for the PLT/1 *Obsidian*, while the X-wings immediately went after the fighters and transports.

Fig. 8-10. The Object of Your Attention

Ace was nearly in range of the platform when he sighted another very large object. Using the scanner, he identified it as a science research ship—the SRS *Sardis*—surely a crucial element to the experimental project.

"I was determined to get a complete ID on that sucker before I blew it to kingdom come," Ace remarked.

Eloquent, no. But Ace had the right idea. He changed course and targeted the *Sardis* research vessel. None of the other B-wings followed, but he probably was oblivious to this.

If I were to list the explosions that erupted as the Rebels found their marks, it would be longer than a Wookie's family tree. Let me just say *it was mayhem*.

There is no stopping a ticked-off Rebel attack force, and this bunch was definitely not happy. Ace ignored every TIE around him and would not let up on his attack on the research ship. He purposely lured two T/e1s to within collateral-damage distance of the *Sardis* just before inflicting the final blasts. They disappeared in the ensuing explosion. Nice move, Ace!

As ordered, the sector was completely empty when the Rebels were finished. (Well, there was a lot of debris.)

The Rebels returned with minimal losses (one X-wing and two B-wings). Ace was credited with destroying the *Sardis*, as well as four CN/Hgrs, four ETRs, one Stormtrooper transport, two T/e1s, one TIE defender, one T/e5, and one T/e2.

Sometimes Ace is so selfish.

Fig. 8-11. So much for the Imperial weapons program.

The Combat Simulation

This is a straightforward strike mission: if it isn't moving, blow it up. With the possible exception of the craft that target you, *you* choose what to engage.

It pays to focus on the platform, however, because it's the most significant source of enemy firepower. Order your wingmates to disable it to get them to bring all their guns to bear on the platform. The *Sardis* has no guns, and its hull is so tough you can't destroy it in time to prevent it from launching its fighters, so it's a secondary target. Shadow squadron's TIE defenders look intimidating but aren't that powerful, especially given that you can outlast a T/D in a head-on.

CRS Liberty

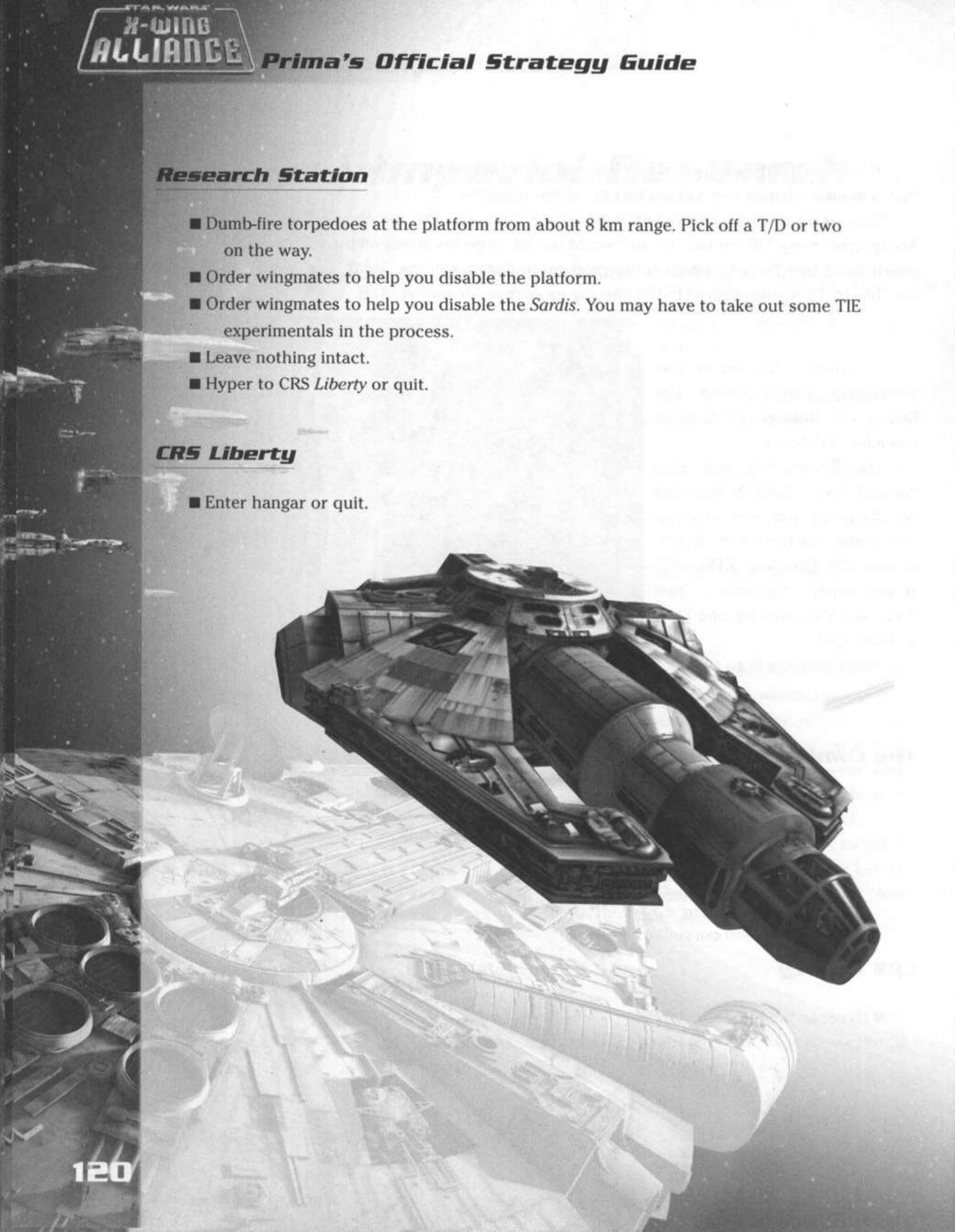
- Hyper to the research station.

Research Station

- Dumb-fire torpedoes at the platform from about 8 km range. Pick off a T/D or two on the way.
- Order wingmates to help you disable the platform.
- Order wingmates to help you disable the *Sardis*. You may have to take out some TIE experimentals in the process.
- Leave nothing intact.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.



Chapter 9
Over the Fence
Liberate Slave Convoy

I have noted that the Alliance responds quickly to reports of slavery. Such was the case this day: possible slaves were being transported to an Imperial base in a convoy.

It was unusual that the report came from an unknown source deep in Imperial space. The signal was an older Alliance code, but still a legitimate one. Strange. This convoy would have to be checked out.

Ace was assigned to Y-wing Gold Group to determine which convoy ships, if any, carried slaves, and to disable the vessels for rescue. Covering the Y-wings was X-wing Gold, a small group of three fighters.

Ace and the others emerged from hyperspace in the designated sector. The area buzzed with Imperial activity. Ace cycled through the CMD to assess the situation. It did not look good.

Present was the ISDII *Goliath*, which meant there would be plenty of TIE fighters to contend with. Golan I Station loomed ahead and between it and Ace was a group of Imperial landing craft—15. Identifying them all wouldn't be easy with that ISDII around.

And the TIE fighters appeared quickly. Lots of them.

Ace headed straight for the L/Cs and tried his best to find an efficient path through them for fast identification. No such dream path presented itself. It would be a rough day for the Rebels.

Ace ignored the TIE fighters and TIE interceptors spewing from the Star Destroyer. After all, what were the X-wings there for? I am sure Ace kept one eye on his rear sensor, all the same.

Ace identified five landing craft holding slaves and disabled them. The others appeared to carry technicians, generators, and provisions, which no doubt made Ace happy; he had something nearby to shoot.

The X-wings did a fine job of handling the TIE fighters, but the interceptors were closing in on the Y-wings rather quickly. Ace had done the identifications, so now he was free to tangle with the TIEs.

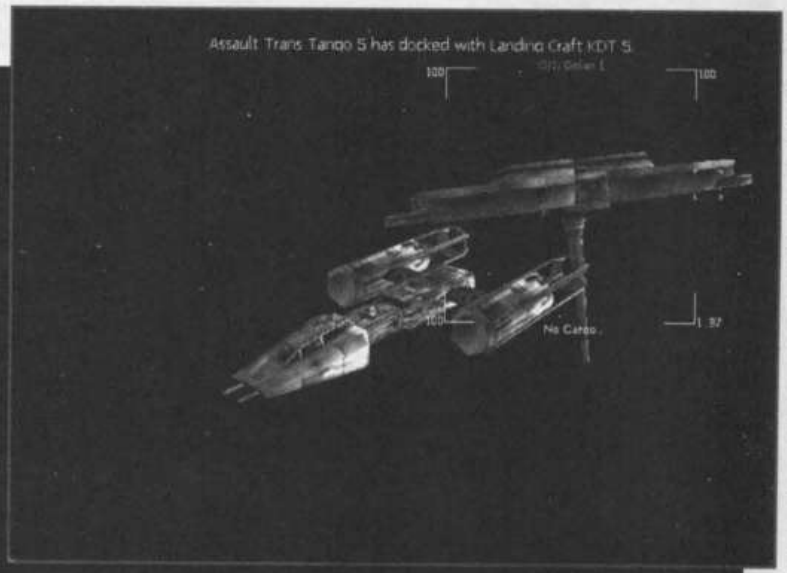


Fig. 9-1. Disable the L/C before they get this close to the Golan 1.

The ATR Group Tango arrived and called for cover as they rescued the slaves. Ace was up for the task and already at it. There were a lot of TIE interceptors. Ace recalled targeting a dozen himself, although he only destroyed seven. Not bad.

The battle seemed to Ace to last an unusually long time. Perhaps the ATRs had problems; he did not know. Wave after wave of TIEs swarmed around the Rebel fighters. Two X-wings and one Y-wing were lost.

Finally, Group Tango signaled they had rescued all the slaves and were heading out. That must have been music to Ace's ears. Gold and Red leaders called for regrouping and ordered everyone out.

When they returned to the CRS *Liberty*, it was announced the slaves were Bothans. It's always a plus to rescue allies in trouble.

But the mystery still troubled High Command: who was the unknown informant?

The Combat Simulation

This mission's dynamic takes some getting used to, but it's no more difficult than any previous mission. If you don't get distracted from your primary purpose—disabling the slave-carrying landing craft—you should have no problem. Don't let any slave ships get too close to Golan 1 Station before disabling them: the assault transports assigned to dock with them won't last long under its defensive fire. Use your map to locate and target the slave ships quickly; there's one in each group of three landing craft.

It's possible to destroy both the ISD *Goliath* and Golan 1 Station. Use your fully linked cannons to take out the *Goliath*'s shield generators. Following standard anti–capital ship procedure, disable it as soon as you destroy the second shield generator. The Golan is trickier. Save your torpedoes for its shields, and attack the stem protruding from the bottom.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the convoy location.

Convoy Location

- Help wingmates inspect the first three landing craft.
- Disable the slave carriers as they're revealed, out of range of the Golan 1.
- Optionally, disable and destroy the rest of the convoy.
- Once ATR Tango completes mission, you may go, or take on the *Goliath* or the Golan 1.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Supply Rebels with Warheads

Ace was unhappy when Aeron and I arrived in the *Sabra* to pick him up. Where is the *Otana*? I could almost hear him thinking. I was tempted to try a little droid humor on him and say I had wrecked it, but I did not want to risk being shut down.

Ace and Aeron wasted a good 10 minutes doing the human sibling greeting ritual, and then we took off for our destination, a Viraxo cargo facility. Aeron explained that, with Uncle Antan's approval, we were to sneak into Viraxo territory and steal warheads. The Rebellion was in dire need of these, and it would be profitable for the Azzameens, as well.

My experiences with the Azzameen family have lead me to conclude the Azzameens could not sneak their way out of a nebulon storm. I mean no disrespect, but recent attempts at being covert had not exactly gone as planned.

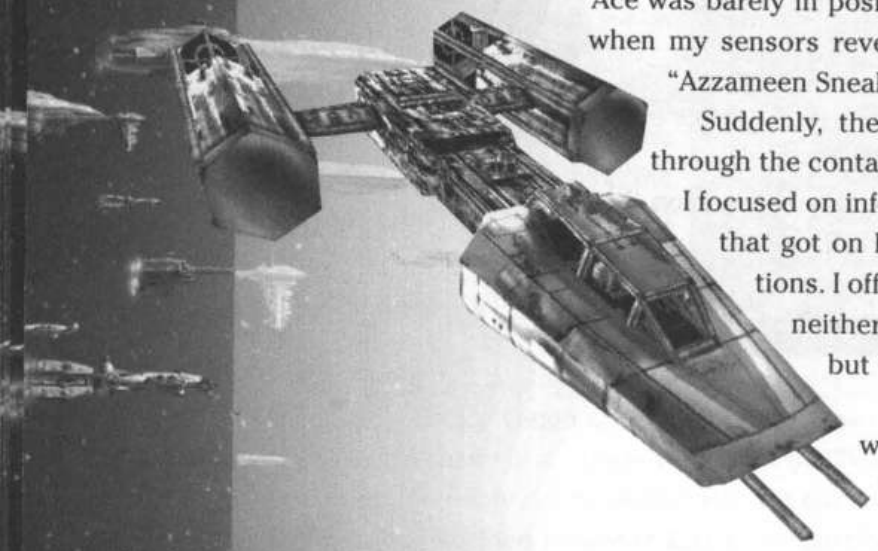
The plan sounded just great to Ace.

We would not be alone on this mission. CTRNS Group Magnum would arrive and pick up the ID'd warhead containers. Magnum's three cargo transports could pick up three containers each. The *Sabra* would be there to cover the transports.

Ace and Aeron expected to find a couple of gun emplacements at the Viraxo facility, but I do not believe they expected so many Viraxo Razor fighters. I counted three patrolling the area.

I was comfortable with Ace at the helm, but I, too, wished we had the *Otana*. The *Sabra* is less modified and armed. Still, with Ace at the lasers, I would not have wanted to be a Viraxo.

Ace went straight for the containers, transferring all cannon energy to the engines, with shields at maintenance level. He was "sneaking."



Ace was barely in position for the ID run down the rows of containers, when my sensors revealed Razors headed our way. So much for the "Azzameen Sneak."

Suddenly, the throttle was thrown to full and Ace shot off through the containers. Aeron went to the turret laser position and I focused on informing Ace of the incoming Razors' status. When that got on his nerves, I switched to helping with identifications. I offered several times to operate the turret laser, but neither Ace nor Aeron had the decency to say anything but "Shut up, Emkay." Rude.

The Viraxo Razor fighters finally caught up with us and Ace showed them an example of Rebel pilot maneuvering. Ace continued getting IDs on the warhead containers even while dueling a flight of Razors. It was a sight to behold.

Ace had destroyed two Razors by the time he finished with the containers. He knew the CTRNS Magnum Group would arrive shortly, so he went into full dogfight mode, sending maximum energy to the lasers.

Razor fighters exploded everywhere. Aeron took out a couple from the turret—quite a feat, considering how Ace was flying. Only two Razors remained when Ace chose to target the two gun emplacements. A true Rebel pilot, he knew the GPLTs would prove a major threat to the Magnum transports. He destroyed them both, dragging along the pursuing Razors for Aeron's target practice. The maneuver also kept the Razors away from Magnum Group, which had arrived and radioed it was beginning pickups.

Just then, an XTS-673 bulk cruiser appeared and began launching Supa fighters. Aeron confirmed they were Black Sun ships. She also confirmed it was a trap.

Ace was used to traps. He was used to being outnumbered, too. A total of 24 Supa fighters had been launched. Obviously, the Viraxos had known we would be there.

Ace expertly kept the Supas occupied long enough for Magnum Group to complete its job and hyperspace out. Ace followed without hesitation, which was wise; the *Sabra* had taken far too many hits.

We escorted Magnum Group safely to the Rebel corvettes awaiting the warheads. The Rebellion was stronger now, but the Azzameens weaker: there was a Viraxo informant in their ranks.

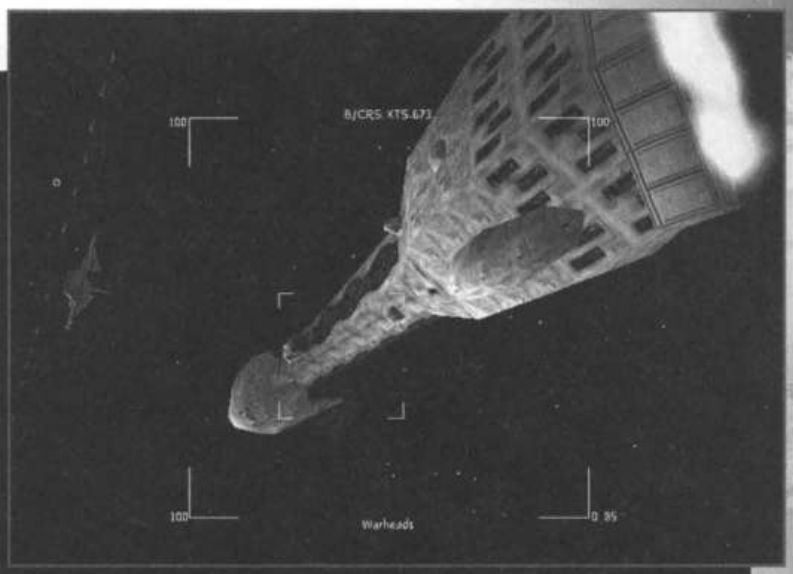


Fig. 9-2. No more Supa fighters will come out to play once this is gone.

The Combat Simulation

This mission can be easy, as long as you use the autoturret frequently. Inspect the containers soon after you destroy the first wave of Razor fighters. You must take out the gun platforms before CTRNS Magnum Group gets in range. Don't destroy the Razor fighters too quickly; once the last wave is gone, a bulk cruiser and a slew of Supa fighters show up. Give the CTRNS a chance to complete the first three docking operations before doing away with the last Razor.

When the B/CSR arrives, head for it. Supa fighters will try to intercept you; shoot them until they break off their attack, and then continue toward the cruiser. Use basic turret tactics to destroy it, popping off a few shots at the Supas now and then. Remember that you can rotate your craft while you're in the turret by pressing joystick button 2 and moving the joystick left or right. This can help you line up a shot that otherwise would be out of reach. Magnum Group does a decent job of defending itself, but you may need to rush to help if it they're getting excessively damaged.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to Viraxo storage yard.

Viraxo Storage Yard

- Inspect all CN/A.
- Destroy gun platforms.
- Destroy the Razor fighters before the Black Sun ships arrive.
- Destroy the bulk cruiser XTS-673 with the turret, distracting Supa fighters as necessary.
- Assist your freighters against the Supa fighters.
- Once all of CTRNS Magnum have escaped, hyper to Rebel Rendezvous.

Rebel Rendezvous

- Hyper to CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Recon Imperial Research Facility

Alliance High Command gave a lot of attention to the anonymous informant mystery. Yet another anonymous tip had arrived: There was an important—and *vulnerable*—Imperial research facility in the Kuat system. It would be unable to defend itself against an organized surprise assault.

Alliance High Command soon issued orders to assault the facility. Ace joined X-wing Red Group (six strong), which, with A-wing Blue Group (four), took off to the Kuat system.

The X-wings were to take out static defenses immediately and inspect the facility. Ace's group also had six torpedoes aboard for added punch. The A-wings were along as fighter sweep and escort.

The Imperial facility didn't expect an attack. The Rebel force swept in on the unsuspecting station and targeted their assigned objectives. The gunboats in the area, caught off-guard, responded in an unorganized manner—not wise when facing a flight of Rebel A-wings with X-wing backups.

Ace claimed two of the three gun emplacements before he turned to the gunboats. There were more, now; the Imperial research facility (which Ace ID'd on his way to the gunboats) had launched another 12.

Gunboats have respectable firepower, but they're neither quick nor agile. This was to be their undoing. None of them survived the fight.

Immediately after the last Gunboat exploded, the area was filled with torpedoes targeting the facility. Ace noticed a strange hatch on its inner rim. When its shields went down, he decided to blow the hatch and have a look inside. I can only imagine his joy at finding a *vulnerable* energy generator. One torpedo and the entire base was destroyed. Ace then proceeded to destroy the remaining satellites. His orders were to destroy *everything*, right?

The sector was a mess when the Rebels destroyed the last Imperial craft (a gunboat). But there was no time to celebrate. An Imperial Star Destroyer emerged from hyperspace and launched a huge wave of TIE fighters, bombers, and advanced fighters.

The Rebels—and, wisely, Ace—headed for the hyper buoy. But the Star Destroyer sat right in their path, as did the TIEs. Surely Ace was happy; he fancied head-on action. The other rebel pilots may have been a little nervous, though.

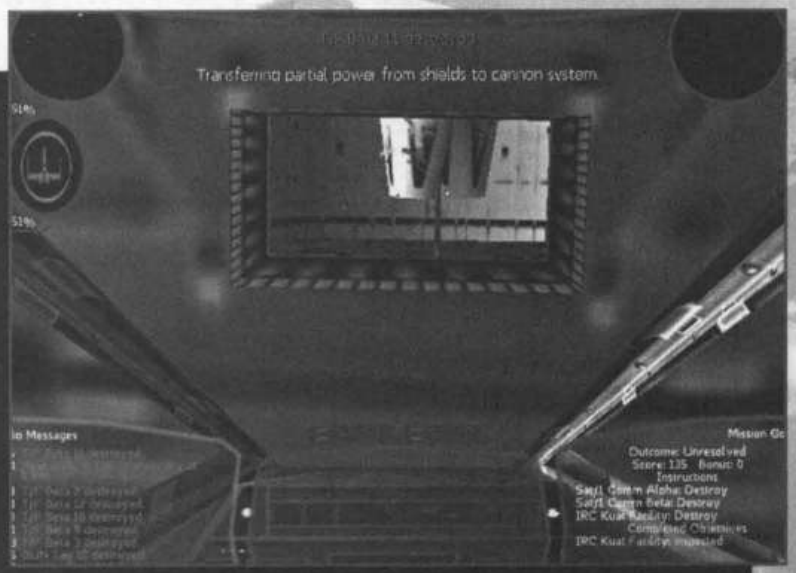


Fig. 9-3. What could be inside?

The Rebels did not turn and fight the superior Imperial force confronting them. Instead, they blazed their way through the middle of them, dodged the Star Destroyer's multiple lasers, and made for the hyper buoy.

It was a smart move and a successful mission. Guess who was last to leave.

The Combat Simulation

This fairly routine strike mission features an interesting special effect. The Imperial research center has a hatch leading to its interior that's vulnerable once the shields are down. Blowing the hatch reveals the energy generator, a highly vulnerable component. Destroying it destroys the IRC—much quicker than trying to take it out with hull damage.

Rebel Fleet

- Hyper to the Kuat system.

Kuat System

- Take out the gun platforms. You may have to fend off gunboats on the way.
- Inspect the Imperial research center.
- Bring down the research center's shields and destroy the hatch.
- Fire a torpedo at the energy generator. You don't want to be inside the facility when it blows up.
- Hyper to the Rebel fleet.

Rebel Fleet

- Enter hangar or quit.

Investigate Imperial Communications Array

The information from the anonymous Imperial informant had been accurate each time, intensifying Alliance High Command's curiosity.

Ace's superiors decided to conduct a raid on an Imperial communications array center and have a medium corvette, the *Python*, dock with the array and download its logs. The data might reveal the source of the anonymous tips. Ace was part of a four-ship A-wing group loaded with 12 missiles each. The missiles were to destroy the array and any other structures in the area after the logs were downloaded.

What the Rebels *did not* expect was a minefield. These posed a direct threat to the arriving corvette and had to be destroyed quickly. Ace swooped in to identify the communications Relay and container hangars. He also noted six satellites, type SAT/1. Ace also managed to eliminate a couple of mines during all this.

The other Rebels went after the relatively small TIE fighter group patrolling the center. Ace knew they could handle them, so he stuck with his ID run, the mines, and the static defenses. His hands were full. Mines were exploding in every direction as the Rebels began sweeping the area, now that the TIEs were destroyed. Careful aim was crucial to avoid harming the nearby satellites too early.

The *Python* appeared and moved through the cleared space to dock with the array. Once it had downloaded the Imperial logs, the Rebels could finish destroying the site.

All seemed to be going smoothly, when the Imperials arrived. The Imperial escort carrier *Halberd* emerged from hyperspace and in seconds had launched a wave of TIE fighters, bombers, and interceptors. Ace targeted the TIE bombers and readied his missiles: the bombers must be destroyed right away or the *Python* would be in real trouble.

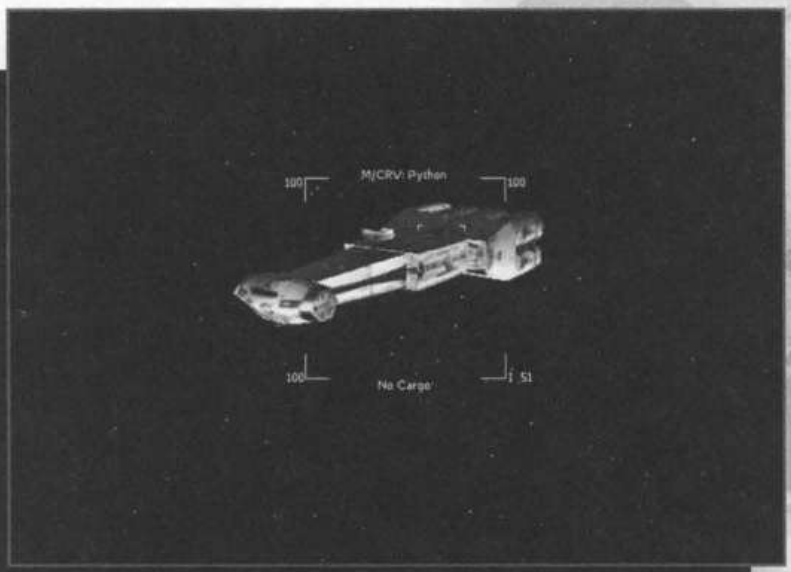


Fig. 9-4. Protect the *Python*.

Using the A-wing's superb speed, Ace broke up the bomber formation headed for the *Python*. Then he targeted the escort carrier while the other A-wings engaged the interceptors and fighters. The escort carrier was the source of the TIEs, and Ace knew it had to go.

The remaining TIEs seemed to lose their spirit once the carrier was gone. When all enemy fighters had been eliminated, and the *Python* was safely out of the sector, the A-wings wasted no seconds in destroying the structures. Nothing was left when they finished.

I was particularly moved by this mission's records. In them, I found a comment by Ace as he delivered the final blows to the Carrier: "This one is for Emkay!" Too bad radio interference prevented the other Rebels from hearing it.

The Combat Simulation

The beginning of this mission comprises simple mine-clearing and dogfighting, with a little inspection thrown in. Make sure you're very careful about putting satellites between you and mines: if the mine blows it up before you've inspected it, you lose.

Once all the TIE fighters are gone, the satellites and communications relay inspected, and the mines cleared, the modified corvette *Python* and an Imperial escort carrier arrive. Be wary of fighters as you focus on protecting the *Python* from the bombers. It wouldn't hurt to shoot down a few torpedoes in the process; each torpedo you destroy is one less the *Python* has to deal with.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the communications array.

Communications Array

- Destroy the TIE fighters.
- Clear all mines and inspect satellites.
- Inspect the communications relay.
- Protect CRV *Python* from TIE bombers.
- Once the *Python* escapes, hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Plant Listening Device

Aeron and I picked up Ace again on the *Liberty* to help with another family task. He did not show it, but I think Ace was worried he would miss a Rebel mission while he was away.

Again, the family plan was to *sneak* in to a Viraxo communications setup and plant a listening device to monitor their dealings with the Empire. Ace would pilot the *Sabra* and fly close enough to area satellites to find one adequate for the listening device. Aeron would then leave the *Sabra* in a zero-g utility rig and "sneak" to the satellite to plant the device.

I kept a sharp monitor on laser energy levels.

Two gunboats were waiting for us, or so it seemed. They came right at us. As Ace took them on, I scanned and noticed an ETR mine-layer busily scattering mines. Wonderful.

Ace destroyed the gunboats in short order and renewed the satellite reconnaissance. The process was slower because we had to clear the minefield first, but we got the job done.

Aeron left the *Sabra* as soon as the area near the selected satellite was clear.

As Ace waited, an Imperial assault shuttle appeared—and launched six Zero G Stormtroopers.

As difficult to hit as Zero Gs are, Ace got them all before they reached Aeron. He took care of the shuttle, too. Then an Imperial Strike cruiser entered the area and started launching fighters. Ace pulled up near where Aeron was "modifying" the satellite. She was just finishing. She came aboard and we threw the *Sabra* full-throttle toward the hyper buoy.

The Azzameens, it appeared, had another victory under their belts.

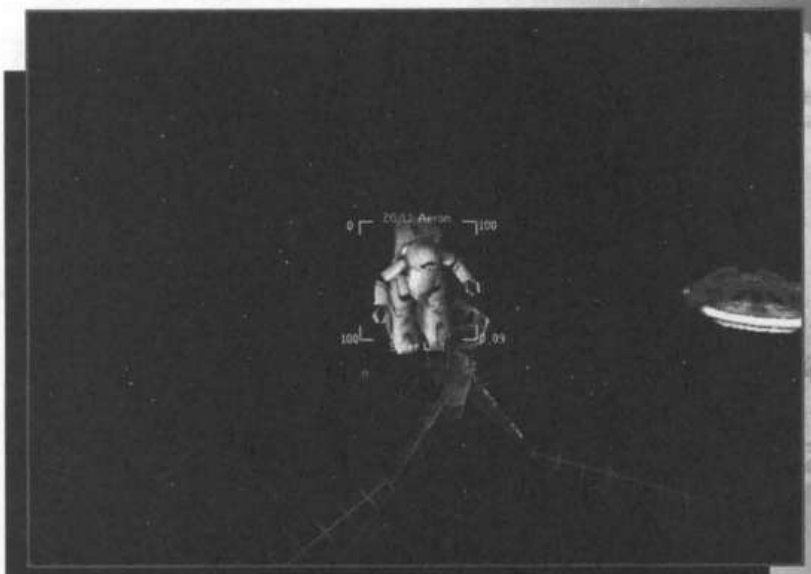


Fig. 9-5. Aeron and the Satellite

The Combat Simulation

This has the potential to be the most frustrating mission you've faced so far. It's very unforgiving of mistakes, and if you fail, it's not always clear why, unless you have a film. Make sure you destroy all the mines before inspecting the satellites; one stray shot is all it takes to kill Aeron or destroy the mission-critical satellite. The latter is always *UNKNOWN 24-1*, or *Commsat-6* once it's been identified.

The Zero-G Stormtroopers can be difficult to hit, but the autoturret takes care of them unfailingly at a range of about .2 km. Prioritize Zero-G Stormtroopers *TK-#*: they'll attack Aeron or the satellite. Start heading for Aeron when the STRKC arrives. If you are not in position when she finishes her docking operation, you may end up getting pulped by the TIE fighters as you stop to let her catch up to you.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the communications array.

Communications Array

- Destroy the gunboats.
- Use the turret to destroy the mine-layer.
- Clear all mines.
- Inspect *Commsat - 6*.
- Destroy the assault shuttle with your turret, and then clear any Zero-G Stormtroopers it may have released, focusing first on *TK-#*.
- Stay near Aeron so she can dock with you quickly when she's done.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rendezvous with Defector

Ace returned to the *Liberty* in time to be assigned to a large force of X-wings destined for an assault on an Imperial outpost. Actually, the assault was intended as a diversion to allow the now-known Imperial informant a chance to defect to the Rebellion. The informant, an Imperial officer named Zaletta, was to slip out in a group of escaping shuttles, be "captured" by the Rebels, and taken to the awaiting Rebel frigate *Redemption*.

As they emerged from hyperspace in the Eidoloni system, Ace's group targeted the two expected squadrons of TIE fighters. The TIEs did not last long, and then the Rebels began pounding the outpost.

The Rebels spotted the escaping Imperial shuttles and Ace responded, moving all energy to the engines and rushing to ID as many shuttles as possible. The defector would have to hyper out, too, or it would look suspicious. The defector had to be inspected.

Ace's plan: "Inspect them all as I close in." And it worked. The defector was picked up (from the third shuttle Ace targeted) and the Imperial outpost was destroyed. All the Rebels left the area safely.

The reception at the Rebel frigate *Redemption* was jubilant—until the Imperial Star Destroyer and an *Interdictor*-class cruiser showed up. It was a suspicious coincidence. Whether the defector had arranged the trap was unknown. Either way, the Rebels had to protect that shuttle, as well as the *Redemption*.

It was a furious fight. The Imperials threw out squadrons of TIE fighters, bombers, advanced fighters, and interceptors—all intent on destroying the *Liberty*, the *Redemption*, and the AA-23 shuttle (the defector's craft). A vital part of the Rebel fleet was now vulnerable.

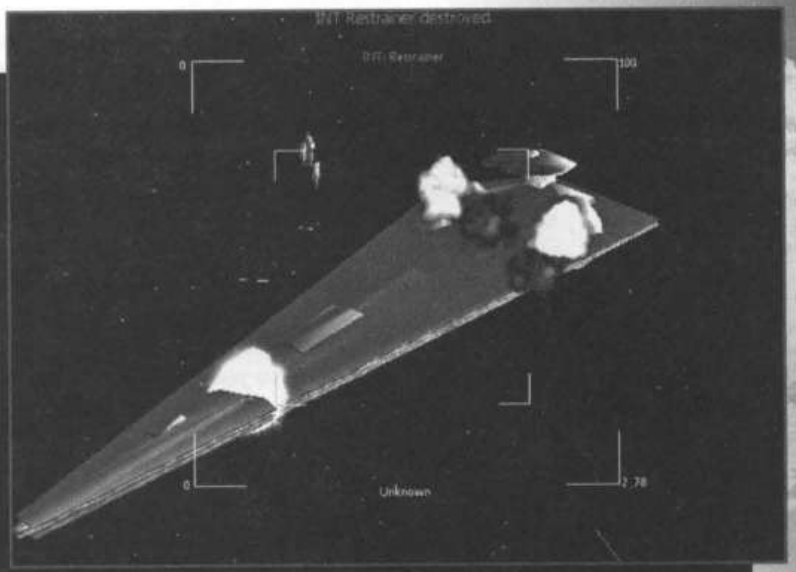


Fig. 9-6. The Empire should consider painting bull's-eyes on these things. Interdictor crews get hazard pay for a reason.

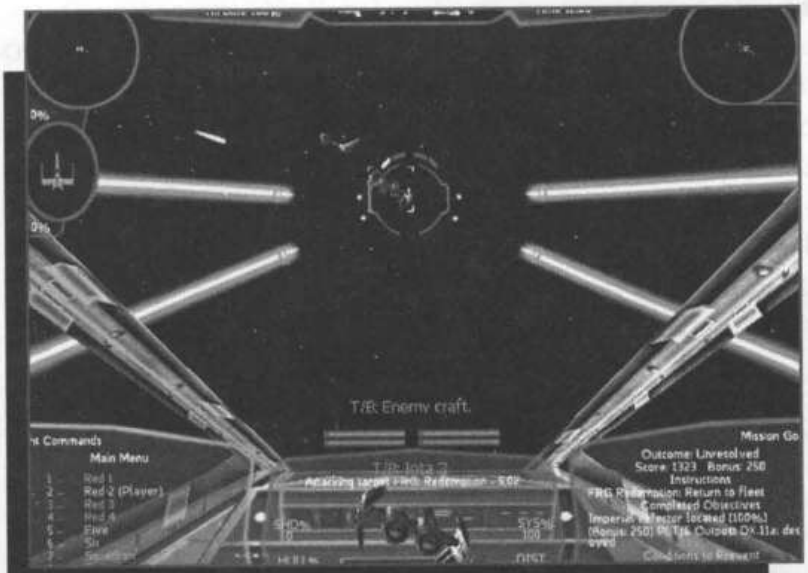


Fig. 9-7. TIE bomber pilot—another dangerous job.

Ace again gave the TIE bombers and advanced fighters top priority. In the end, the tactic paid off. Rebel ships suffered tolerable damage—nothing that would interfere with the hyperdrives. With the defector safely in custody, the *Liberty*, the *Redemption*, and a few very satisfied Rebel fighter pilots hyperspaced away.

The Combat Simulation

The first part of this mission isn't too difficult. You and your wingmates should have no trouble with the fighters. When the shuttles launch, have your wingmates inspect that target type so you won't have to chase them all down. Take out the platform, and then head for the rendezvous point.

At this point, things get tricky. Once the Interdictor cruiser arrives, have your wingmates attack it long enough to launch their torpedoes. When their torps are away, send them after the huge swarm of TIE fighters the ISD launched. Dogfight until the *Liberty* shows up, and then dump everything to engines and go get a reload.

When the TIE bombers come out, send two wingmates after them and the third after the interceptors. Dumb-fire your torpedoes at the Interdictor and head back for more warheads. Once the Interdictor is gone, focus on the TIE bombers that attack the *Liberty*. The *Redemption* should be able to withstand the wave of bombers that attacks it, but it wouldn't hurt to stop them if it doesn't interfere with protecting the *Liberty*.

Once the *Redemption* makes it into hyperspace, the ISD will fire on the *Liberty*. If you kept on top of the TIE bombers, it should survive to make it out. Be careful rejoining the *Liberty*: it lies very close to your exit point, any you may need to dodge to avoid it.

Fleet

- Hyper to the rendezvous point.

Rendezvous Point

- Hyper to the Imperial outpost.

Imperial Outpost

- Destroy all fighters.
- Bring down the platform's shields.
- Send wingmates to inspect the shuttles as they launch.
- Destroy the platform.
- Hyper to the rendezvous point.

Rendezvous Point

- Recharge as necessary.
- Have the entire squadron launch torpedoes at the Interdictor cruiser when it arrives; then send them after the TIE fighters.
- Get a reload when the *Liberty* arrives.
- Destroy the Interdictor while two wingmates focus on the TIE bombers.
- Defend the *Liberty* from TIE bomber attacks.
- Beware of TIE advanced fighters.
- Hyper to the fleet when the *Liberty* leaves.

Fleet

- Avoid crashing into *Liberty*.
- Enter hangar or quit.

Scramble!

Reports of explosions in Hangar Bay 2 of the CRS *Liberty* surprised everyone—except for a certain Rebel Commander Kupalo. I am inclined to believe it was information gained from the recent defector, ex-Imperial Commander *Zaletta*, that provoked Kupalo to make his escape. The Rebels now had no doubts as to who the traitor was.

The scramble was called. Ace answered the call perhaps too quickly: records reveal he wore *inappropriate attire* underneath the flight suit. I did not inquire.

The other available Rebel pilot was our good friend, Olin Garn. It pleased me to know Ace had Olin with him. Olin was reliable. Olin also was less stubborn than Ace, and might keep him out of trouble. I feared Ace was becoming more and more like his brother, Emon.

The two of them sped off in their A-wings to capture the escaping traitor. Ace and Olin pursued Kupalo through a number of jump points. Each time they closed, Kupalo released homing mines. These nasty defensive weapons are easy to destroy, but frustratingly difficult to hit. I can not stand the annoying things. A few of Kupalo's friends, in gunboats, tried to interfere, and met untimely ends.

Ace and Olin finally caught up, and, boy, did Ace let him have it! Olin later told me he thought Ace was going to blow that traitor to bits. But Ace did not. "I could not let my emotions get the better of me. I decided to save him for ATR *Storm Unit*," he said later. My guess is the sudden appearance of an Imperial starship emitting TIE fighters, bombers, and interceptors robbed him of the time.

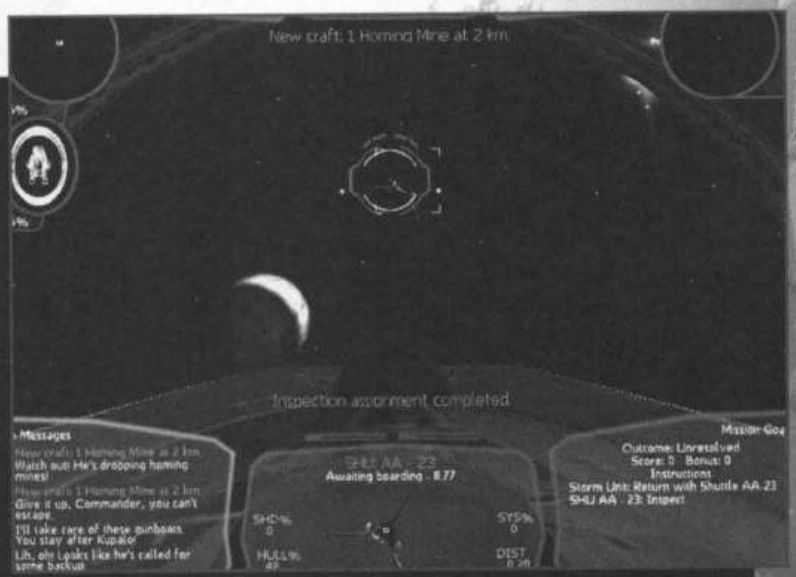

New craft: 1 Homing Mine at 2 km
Inspection assignment completed
Messages
Watch out! He's dropping homing mines!
Give it up, Commander, you can't escape.
I'll take care of these gunboats. You stay after Kupalo!
Uh, oh! Looks like he's called for some backup
SHU AA - 23
Awaiting boarding - 8.77
Mission Goa
Outcome: Unresolved
Score: 0 Bonus: 0
Instructions
Storm Unit: Return with Shuttle AA-23
SHU AA - 23: Inspect
SHD%
HULL%
SYS%
DIST

Fig. 9-8. There he is! Get him!

ATR *Storm Unit* arrived, as expected, to pick up Kupalo's disabled shuttle AA-23. With Imperial fighters all around, the ATR's task would be no walk on the beach.

In the end, all turned out well. Ace and Olin were highly praised by their superiors for their successful pursuit. Especially moving was Rebel Admiral Yamarus's appreciation speech to Ace, where he specifically mentioned it was Alliance etiquette to treat their droids, especially MK-09s, as equals.

Unfortunately, the speech is too long to include here.

The Combat Simulation

The procedure for flying this mission is no different whether you stop Kupalo's shuttle in the first or the second region you can stop him in, but stopping him in the first region is much easier.

The procedure is simple. As soon as you enter the region, dump everything to engines, and then fire four missiles at the shuttle. When you get within 2 km of the shuttle, it launches homing mines. If your speed is 180, you can evade these easily if you don't fly in a straight line too long. As soon as you inspect the shuttle, it should stop, as your missiles will have brought its hull down to below 50 percent. If its hull is higher than 50 percent, it may have avoided a missile somehow; shoot it with lasers until its hull is below 50 percent.

Once the shuttle stops (or reaches the second combat area), an Imperial Star Destroyer arrives and starts launching fighters. Concentrate on the TIE bombers and use the A-wing's superior speed and maneuverability to keep out of harm's way. Be aware of waves of fighters or interceptors that launch after the bombers. Often they'll catch up to the bombers just as you get in cannon range—a nasty surprise.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to Shuttle Coords 1.

Shuttle Coords 1

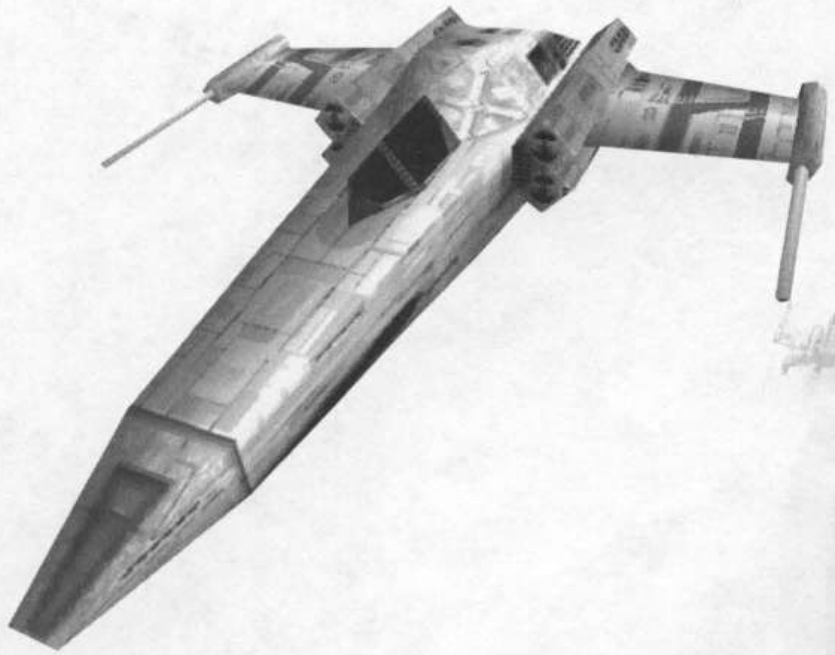
- Dump everything to engines and fire four missiles at the shuttle.
- Avoid the homing mines long enough to inspect the shuttle; it shuts itself down.
- If the shuttle escapes, hyper to Shuttle Coords 2.
- Destroy the homing mines and gunboats.
- Protect the ATR from TIE bombers.
- Once the ATR gets away, hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

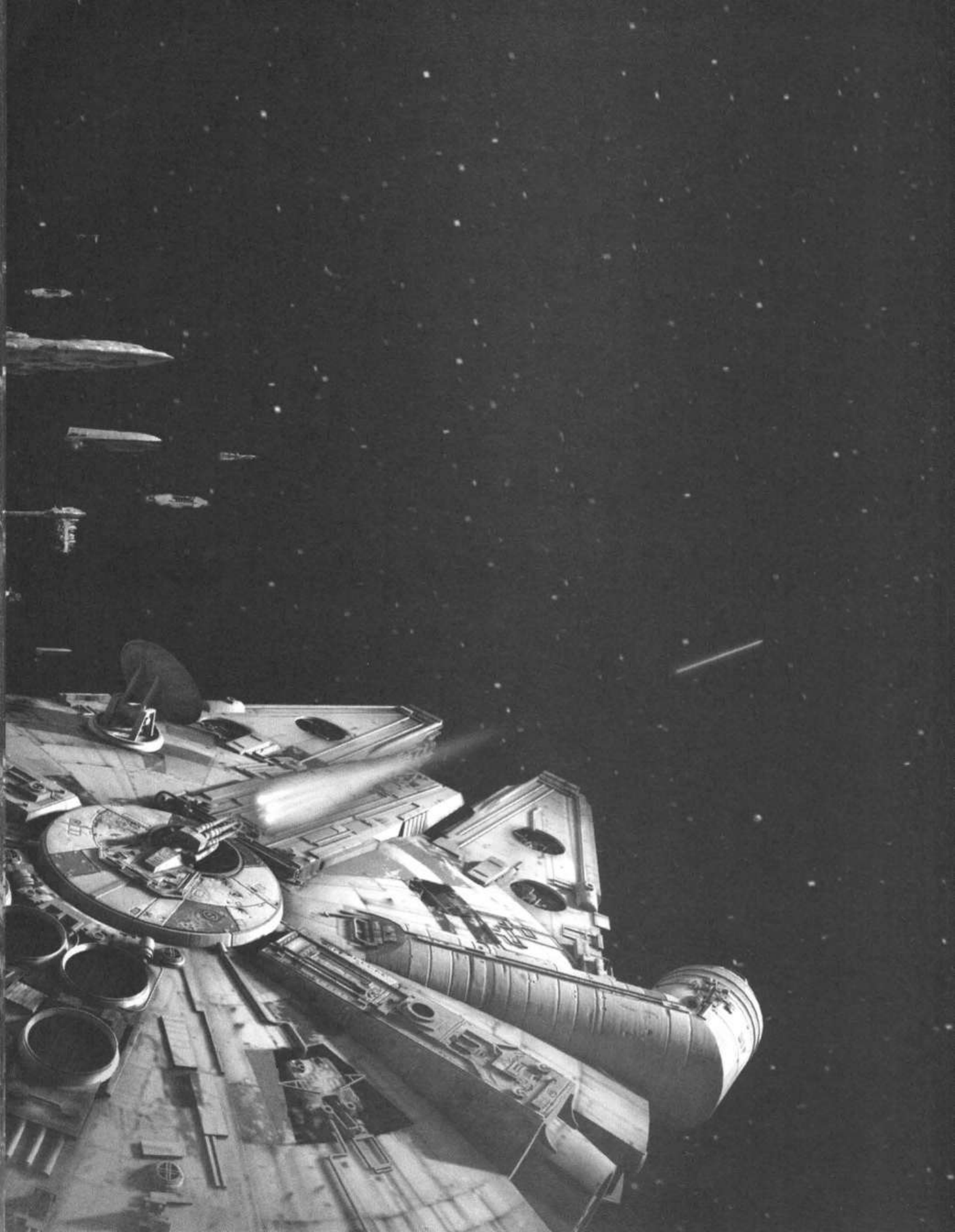
Shuttle Coords 2

- Inspect the shuttle and make sure it's below 50 percent hull.
- Protect the ATR from TIE bombers.
- Once the ATR gets away, hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.





Chapter 10
The Bothan Connection

Shipment to Mining Colony

Fate brought Ace and I together once more. The Rebellion needed supplies (and the Azzameens needed business) desperately. The Azzameens promised the Rebels they would deliver the supplies shortly.

But they did not mention they were going to borrow one of their pilots (Ace) to raid a Viraxo storehouse and *steal* the goods. I do not think it would have mattered.

Ace took control of the *Otana* and Aeron navigated. We left the CRS *Liberty* and hypered to the Bilbringi V repair yards. There we met up with a trio of Azzameen-hired Toscan fighters. Azzameen cargo freighters CNVYR Group Lara (two) and CARG Group Juno (six) would meet us later on.

With the three Toscan fighters, Ace took the *Otana* to the Viraxo industrial complex storehouse. We had to clear the area of defensive opposition before the vulnerable cargo tugs and conveyors arrived to grab the goods.

When we entered the Viraxo area, six Black Sun Supa fighters and a system patrol craft confronted us. Ace knew Black Sun fighter groups were usually larger; no doubt more would show up soon.

Ace dispatched the SPC from the turret while I piloted the *Otana*. The Toscan fighters engaged the first group of Supa fighters, and Ace and I soon joined the fray. We were on our way to interdict the second wave of three Supas attacking our recently arrived freighters when the Marauder corvette *Charybdis* entered the area, along with a disconcertingly large group of fighters—16 in all.

Ace reacted quickly, telling our security forces to engage the corvette to disable it. Under the combined firepower of three Toscan fighters and a YT-2000 Corellian transport, even the mighty shields of the Marauder corvette did not last long.

With the corvette out of the picture, Ace ordered our trusty mercenary pilots to engage the remaining Supa fighters while he and I eliminated all 12 Razor fighters. Ace could be selfish in that way.

Once Lara and Juno groups had finished collecting the containers, and the area was clear of enemy fighters, we made the jump to the Vergesso asteroids to drop off the goods. Aeron needed to be dropped off at Vergesso Base, so that was on Ace's agenda, too. The Azzameen freighter convoy awaited us.

Fig. 10-1. A Deadly Surprise Attack

Somehow four Supa fighters learned the coordinates. Despite the presence of our vulnerable freighters, they attacked only us—as if the attack was motivated by something more than the recovery of stolen goods. The damage the *Otana* had sustained in the earlier conflict wasn't insignificant, and it was only through superlative piloting (and some handy gunnery work by yours truly) that we survived.

Ace then docked at the base and Aeron disembarked safely. Ace and I said our good-byes and headed for the *Liberty*.

Ace had to get back. After all, there was a war going on.

The Combat Simulation

Relentless dogfighting is what this mission is mostly about. Have your wingmates go after the Supa fighters in the beginning, while you take out the SCT in the turret. Try to stick by your freighters, so you'll be in position to intercept attackers. The quickest way to dispatch attacking fighters is to use the autoturret and the ion cannon at the same time; find a new target as soon as you disable each fighter. When the Black Sun convoy arrives, it's a good idea to disable the Marauder corvette *Charybdis*; order your wingmates to assist you. Don't bother destroying it; there are plenty of fighters more worthy of your attention.

Once the *Charybdis* is out of commission, send your wingmates after the Supa fighters while you keep the 12 Razor fighters flying superiority off their backs. Again, this is mostly a matter of acquiring a target with [R], pressing [F], and disabling the target—many times in succession and as quickly as you can. At some point, you might need to make the Razors chase you as you go help the convoy fend off Supa fighters. A YT-2000 Corellian transport with cannon recharge turned off and shields at maintenance can move faster than a Razor fighter, so you can use the trip as an excuse to do some lethal tail-gunning in the turret.

After the Supa fighters are gone, there will be no more threats to your freighter (assuming you disabled the *Charybdis*). If there are any Razors left, see if you can get them before your remaining wingmates do. Once all active threats are destroyed or disabled, it's time to think about leaving—unless you're bloodthirsty enough to destroy disabled craft. You could very easily be quite damaged at this point, and the YT-2000 takes a painfully long time to recharge its shields.

When you arrive at the Vergesso asteroids, four Supa fighters ambush you in a vicious assassination attempt. Run away until they're just out of range, and then slow to just a bit slower than the Supas. As they catch up, keep blasting the nearest one with the turret. This technique will take you far from the base, but you're guaranteed to survive if you can keep them from getting within .7 km.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the Bilbingi shipyard.

Bilbingi Shipyard

- Hyper to the Viraxo storehouse.

Viraxo Storehouse

- Destroy SPC with the turret while your wingmates take out the Supa fighters.
- Protect your freighters.
- Disable the *Charybdis* when it arrives, with your wingmates' help.
- Send your wingmates after the Supa fighters, while you take on the Razor fighters.
- Protect the freighters again, if necessary.
- When all attackers are destroyed and the freighters have left, hyper to the Vergesso asteroids.

Vergesso Asteroids

- Destroy all four Supa fighters.
- Dock at Vergesso Base.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

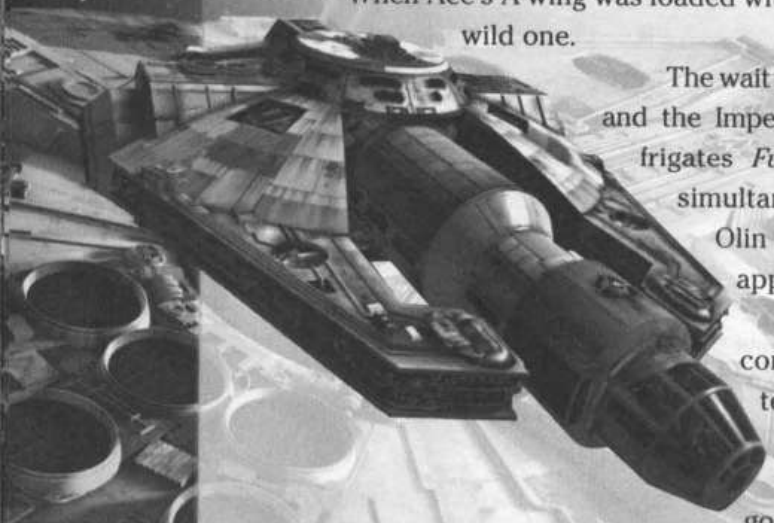
- Enter hangar or quit.

Reconnaissance of Imperial Convoy

According to Ace, this mission was a major turning point in the war against the Empire. The defector, Commander Zaletta, had been cleared of suspicion and had taken over Kupalo's old command. My, how things change in this galaxy.

The basic assignment was simple: wait at an Imperial transit point in the Eidoloni system for a convoy to arrive, and then identify all craft.

The details were less simple: expect heavy resistance from the escorting Imperial warships. When Ace's A-wing was loaded with 12 missiles and chaff, he knew the ID run would be a wild one.



The wait at the Eidoloni system transit point was brief. The convoy and the Imperial warships—VSDII *Vanguard*, VSDII *Protector*, Lancer frigates *Furious* and *Black Hawk*—emerged from hyperspace simultaneously. It took seasoned Rebel pilots such as Ace and Olin (Blue Leader) not to be frightened by the sudden appearance of vastly superior firepower.

Ace stuck to orders, weaving in and out among the convoy ships confirming their identifications and contents. TIE Advanced fighters were everywhere. But Ace's slick maneuvering prevented the TIEs from getting a clear shot. Ace was confident in Olin, who did a good job of occupying most of the TIEs.

Some of the inspected Imperial vessels began leaving the sector and Ace knew he had better inspect those remaining before they got the same idea. He succeeded, but it was close.

Now Ace and Olin had to deal with the warships and their TIE flock. They chose not to hang around. Very wise. Both Ace and Olin put all their A-wings' energy to the engines and made for the hyper buoy. The TIEs struggled to keep up with the A-wings, but the Imperial pilots apparently had not been authorized to commit to the pursuit. The two A-wings hypered to safety at the CRS *Liberty*.

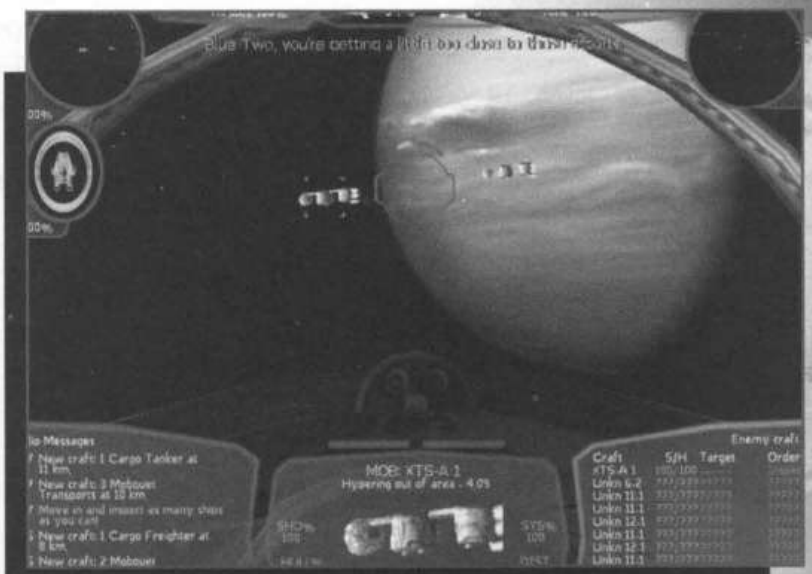


Fig. 10-2. The ships in front leave first.

The data they returned with confirmed that Xizor Transport Systems was under subcontract with the Empire to transport heavy construction materials—evidence that the Empire was either expanding its shipyards or building a new base.

Ace's kills did not increase much this mission (he still bagged five), but the Alliance's knowledge of the Empire did.

The Combat Simulation

As long as you remember to stick to mission goals and not get distracted by the TIE advanced fighters, this mission shouldn't worry you too much. The first group of two Mobquet transports, XTS-A, leaves quickly, so inspect them and the first container train in rapid succession. Because the T/A seem to focus exclusively on you, your wingmate should have no problem keeping them off your back; failing that, you have chaff dispensers. Remember to drop to one-third throttle just before a missile hits you to reduce the time you spend spinning out of control.

After you inspect the convoy, feel free to engage the fighters—if you think your dogfighting skills are up to taking on four veteran TIE advanced fighters at once.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the Eidoloni system.

Eidoloni System

- Send wingmate after T/A.
- Inspect the convoy's foremost ships first, before they can escape. Then inspect the rest.
- Engage the T/A after inspecting the convoy, if you want to.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Mining Colony Under Siege: Rescue Aeron

I played a key role in this rescue mission, but I doubt any human participant ever mentioned it. I was sitting in the *Otana*, minding my own business, when Aeron radioed that the Vergesso repair yards, where she was located, were under Imperial attack.

I knew what to do: get Ace.

Ace responded quickly, and we were off to the Vergesso asteroids in a flash. We had been there before. Navigation was easy.

When we arrived, the area was alive with explosions and laser fire. Darth Vader's *Super*-class Star Destroyer *Executor* was there, as well as another Imperial Star Destroyer and two *Victory*-class Star Destroyers. That meant a lot of TIEs of all varieties.

Ace's main concern was Vergesso Base, where Aeron was. He immediately targeted the TIE bombers near it and took them out. I decimated a TIE advanced from the turret gun, but, as was always the case, the kill ended up in Ace's credits.

Then Ace did something unique: he flew into a mixed group of TIE fighters and bombers and got them to pursue him. With three of them on his tail, Ace intentionally buzzed a Star Destroyer. His clever maneuvering caused the pursuing TIEs to fly right into the turbo laser fire from the ISD. The whole flight was wiped out! I hardly had a thing to do in the turret.

At last the immediate area around the base was temporarily free of enemy fighters. X-wings in the sector had them occupied elsewhere. Ace maneuvered the *Otana* to the base and docked. Waiting for Aeron to board, we were sitting mynocks. Ace moved to the top turret and was ready when more TIEs noticed us and closed in.

Three bombers, along with a couple of fighters, started pecking at us there. Ace was a crack shot, however. Any enemy fighters flying within the turret's cone of fire were goners. The *Otana* took numerous hits from fighters approaching from our blind side, and we were close to having to disengage from the base to defend ourselves. But neither of us was willing to leave Aeron behind.

Finally, Aeron showed up and came aboard. The hatch door had barely closed when Ace jumped back to the controls and slammed the *Otana* to full throttle. The appearance of 12 more X-wings assured our escape.

The base at Vergesso asteroids was lost, but 85 percent of its inhabitants made it out to safety. The Empire's victory was a minor one.

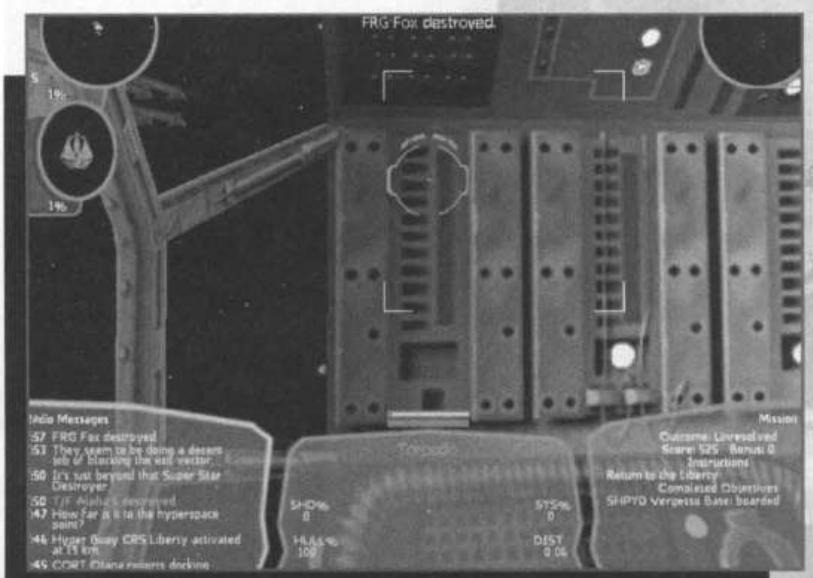


Fig. 10-3. Blind Spot Blues

The Combat Simulation

You're most likely to win this mission by making liberal use of your ion cannon. It may seem necessary to make all haste toward the asteroid shipyard, but if there are any fighters left able to attack you when you dock, they're likely to approach from an angle at which you can't shoot them, and kill you as you scream in frustration.

Wait to dock until after you've disabled every craft that attacks you. The ion cannon isn't too effective unless you're at maximum cannon recharge, so you'll probably need to turn shield recharge off to negate the loss of speed. If you miss something, and it tries to blindside you while you're docked, don't hesitate to abort the docking operation long enough to disable it. You'll have to start the entire docking procedure over, but at least you'll be alive.

Once Aeron is aboard, dump everything to engines and make your run for the hyper point.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the Vergesso asteroids.

Vergesso Asteroids

- Disable all craft attacking you.
- Dock at Vergesso Base.
- Once Aeron is aboard, proceed to hyper point at maximum speed.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Capture the Freighter Suprosa

Ace never shuts up about this mission. I can hardly blame him. This was the first time he met, and flew with, Commander Luke Skywalker and Dash Rendar. It certainly impressed the other Azzameens.

It all started when Alliance Headquarters learned of a freighter carrying a computer programmed with details of a top-priority Imperial military project. That Commander Skywalker and Dash Rendar led the investigative flight only underscored its importance.

Commander Skywalker chose Ace as one of the Y-wing pilots to go along—based solely on the *Liberty*'s credits listing. Luke had no time to socialize. Good thing for Ace, too; he was in a cranky mood that day, and might have said something stupid. Ace is rarely cranky, but when he is, it is just not worth the extra circuit fans to deal with him.

Commander Skywalker piloted the X-wing *Rogue 1* and Dash Rendar his *Outrider*. Ace's Y-wing group of six were to disable (if necessary) Special Bulk Freighter *Suprosa*. Rendar would then dock, board, and retrieve the special cargo.

Records show Commander Skywalker tried his best to avoid violence with the *Suprosa*, but the freighter's captain ignored him. Then Ace moved in and "let loose with the lasers and ion cannons linked at point-blank range." That must have hurt.

The Empire's timing was chillingly accurate. Dash had managed to liberate an Imperial computer from the *Suprosa*, and the Rebel force was on its way to Kothlis to rendezvous with the *Liberty*. Imagine their surprise as they exited hyperspace to see the Imperial Victory Star Destroyer *Hunter* and the Interdictor *Claw*. As long as the Interdictor was in the area, *no one* would be hypering out.

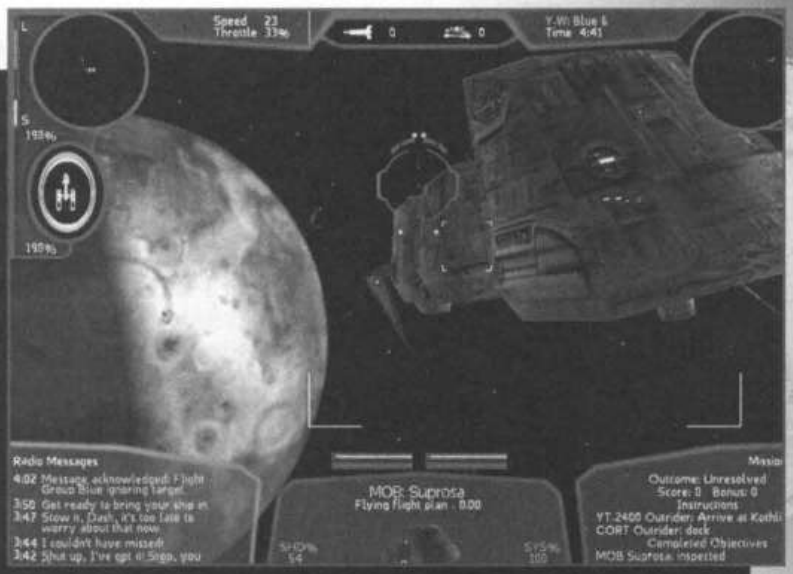


Fig. 10-4. The Renowned *Suprosa*

Fig. 10-5. An Imperial Ambush!

This was Ace's cue to move against the Interdictor. As he and his squadron hammered the huge craft, avoiding its lasers, Dash and Luke tackled TIE fighters, TIE bombers, and assault gunboats.

Ace delivered the final blow to the Interdictor, and Luke signaled that it was time to go.

When Dash and Luke hyperspaced out, the rest of the team made for the hyper buoy. One Rebel pilot, though, chose to continue battling the TIEs to enable the team to leave. This courageous, if foolhardy, pilot destroyed two assault gunboats and three TIE fighters in those closing seconds. Then he, too, hyperspaced to the safety of the CRS *Liberty* at Kothlis.

We know who it was, do we not?

The Combat Simulation

Disabling the *Suprosa* is simple. It doesn't shoot at you, so the first part of the mission is mostly for your intellectual fulfillment.

The trip back to Kothlis, however, is far from uneventful, as the Interdictor *Claw* yanks you out of hyperspace into a hotbed of Imperial activity. Your job is to destroy the *Claw*, or at least to drive it away, so the *Outrider* can escape. The key here is to be patient. Break off your attack at about 1 km. If you get too close, your Y-wing is a sitting duck. Alternate between making attack runs and flying off to recharge your shields until the Interdictor leaves. With your wingmates in formation, give the order to disable your target just as you get into cannon range to have your whole squadron fire on the *Claw* at once. Besides inflicting much damage on the Interdictor, dividing the *Claw*'s attention this way helps prevent your wingmates from getting shredded.

Bothawui

- Hyper to the intercept point.

Intercept Point

- Inspect and disable Special Bulk Freighter *Suprosa*.
- Hyper to Kothlis.

Kothlis (Interdiction Point)

- Drive away the Interdictor *Claw*.
- Hyper to Kothlis.

Kothlis

- Enter hangar or quit.

Abandon Rebel Base at Kothlis

That stolen Imperial computer generated a lot of trouble for the Alliance—and Ace. The Empire attacked the Bothan colony where the stolen computer was being decrypted, forcing it to move to Kothlis II Base, to a sector where Ace was stationed. Ace's luck was holding.

Ace joined a flight of X-wings to patrol the Kothlis II area and watch for the Bothan Shuttle *Fey'lya's Pride* to arrive with the computer.

Then, as they say, the space debris hit the thrusters.

Darth Vader's Super Star Destroyer *Executor* emerged from hyperspace and began spitting out squadrons of TIE fighters. The ISDII *Avenger* followed.

The situation was not good. The shuttle had yet to arrive, and even when it finally did, the computer still had to be transferred to the CRV *Razor*. All the friendly ships, as well as Kothlis II Base, would be vulnerable until that was accomplished. Nothing ever came easily for the Rebellion.

The *Fey'lya's Pride* finally arrived, and Ace decided to cover the area between the base and the CRV *Razor*. The transfer would take place there, so it had to be kept clear. He could also help protect the base from that position.

Assault transports launched in pairs to attack the *Razor*, and waves of TIE bombers descended on Kothlis II Base relentlessly. Ace destroyed six ATRs, a TIE advanced, and four TIE bombers just in his patrol area. The other X-wings faced similar opposition.

The call went out from the CRS *Liberty* to evacuate the base. Just then, the shuttle completed its docking operation with the *Razor*, which then headed toward its hyper point.

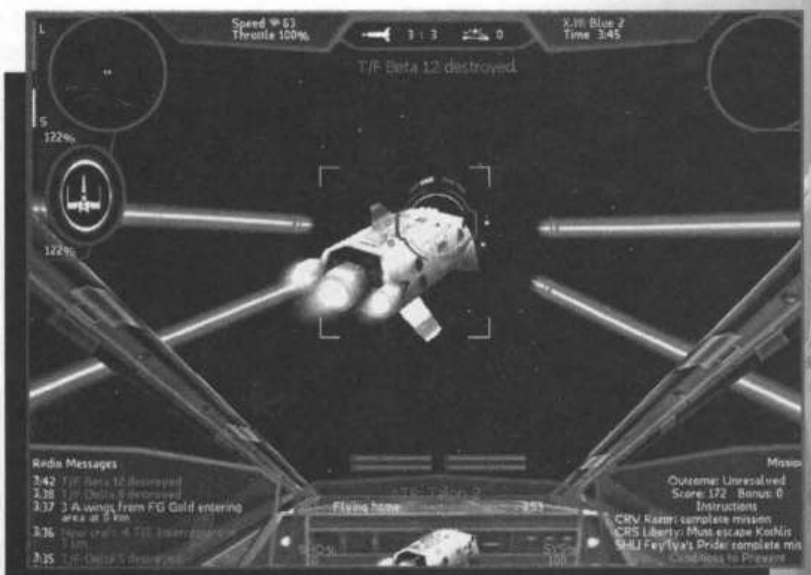


Fig. 10-6. Do not allow assault transports to attack the *Razor*!

Ace continued protecting the corvette until it radioed it was hypering out with the computer safely on board—welcome news. Ace was no longer limited to a patrol area: it was laser time!

Ace ripped loose. TIEs exploded all around him. He seemed invincible. Then Kothlis II Base erupted, and the *Executor* turned its attention to the *Liberty*. Ace tried to draw fire away from his command ship, launching his two remaining torpedoes at the Super Star Destroyer. His valiant effort enabled the *Liberty*'s escape.

There was no point in staying; there was nothing left to defend. The remaining Rebel ships left the sector, Ace with them. The valuable computer was safely in Alliance custody, but the Empire had inflicted another painful blow.

The Combat Simulation

This mission may seem daunting, and it certainly can be, if you don't do certain things.

Your first priority is to protect the CRV *Razor* from the assault transports. Don't engage anything unless it attacks you or the *Razor*. Consider keeping a wingmate or two in formation to help; at the least, they can keep the fighters off you while you deal with the ATRs.

The easiest way to handle the ATRs is to make one withdraw due to damage; the next wave won't come out until the damaged one gets back to the *Executor*'s hangar. Be wary of using proton torpedoes against the assault transports; they'll shoot them down if you have a lock, and it's extremely tricky to dumb-fire successfully without taking proximity damage. The *Razor* must not go below 25 percent shields; if it does, the Super Star Destroyer is likely to destroy it before it can leave.

Once the *Razor* is away, the CRS *Liberty* is your main concern. You may need to distract both the ISD and the SSD; lob a proton torpedo at each to get their attention. If you take too much damage, you can always enter the *Liberty*'s hangar for a quick repair.

Kothlis

- Stay near the *Razor*. Engage only those fighters that attack you. Don't roam.
- Meet the ATRs at about 2 km from the *Razor*. Force one to withdraw, and destroy the other. If you destroy both, you must fight two more.
- Once CRV *Razor* makes it out, dogfight as necessary.
- Draw fire from the *Liberty* by attacking Imperial capital ships.
- Once the *Liberty* escapes, hyper to the rendezvous point.

Rendezvous Point

- Enter hangar or quit.

Protect Imperial Computer

Ace had no sooner flopped onto his bunk, when the alarm sounded. The CRV *Razor*, the Rebel ship carrying the Imperial computer, was having a difficult time making it to Admiral Ackbar's flagship, Calamari Cruiser *Independence*. Imperial forces had continued pursuing the *Razor* and now closed in for the kill.

Ace was ordered to his X-wing. He joined Blue Group as part of an escort flight to protect the trapped CRV *Razor*. The X-wings arrived to find it being pounded by a dozen Imperial gunboats. I don't like gunboats; they take far too long to destroy and hit much to hard.

Ace's group went after them. This sudden counterattack caught the gunboats off-guard. It was a good thing an Azzameen didn't plan *this* "sneak" attack, or it might not have turned out so well.

The gunboats didn't survive, but they held out long enough for the ISDII *Avenger* to arrive. This was real trouble.

As usual, the *Avenger* launched waves of TIE fighters, bombers, and interceptors. What happened next was unexpected: the *Avenger* moved in close to the CRV *Razor*, ensnared it in tractor beams, and reeled it into a docking bay!

The Dreadnaught *Mercury* arrived, responding to the calls for aid. As soon as it radioed its presence, the *Razor* launched the Escape Pod *V33-1XP*. Personnel aboard the *Razor* had escaped—with the computer.

Ace knew what to do. He used his targeting system to determine which fighters were attacking the pod, and took full advantage of the fact that they were paying attention to something else. Perhaps he was getting better at this sneaking business ...

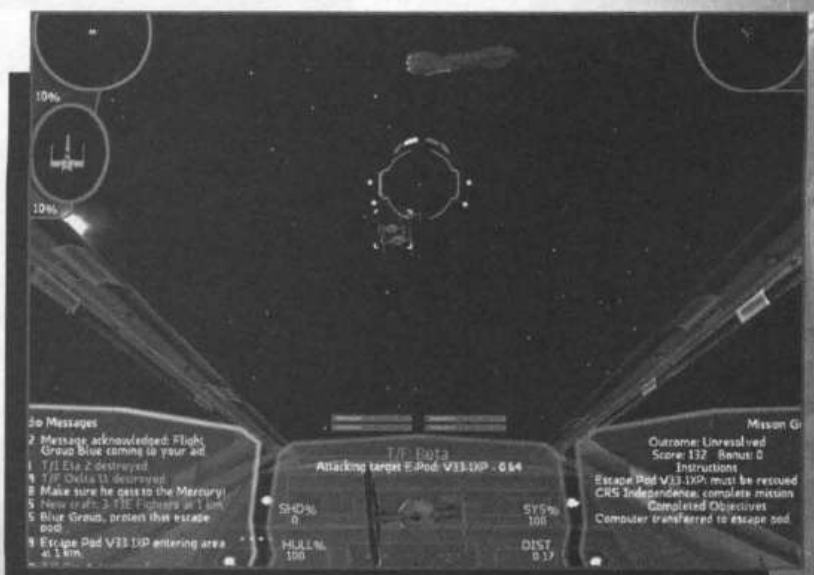


Fig. 10-7. Sneaking Up on Some TIEs

The escape pod made it to the *Mercury* and the entire Rebel group hyperspaced to rendezvous with the CRS *Independence*.

The *Independence* arrived within seconds. The escape pod, again, began its journey from one ship to another, this time to dock on the *Independence*.

Then the situation went sour again. The droid-abusing Imperial Super Star Destroyer *Executor*, Vader's flagship, made its curtain call, its hangar bays spewing waves of TIEs. The SSD *Executor* moved closer to the *Independence* to engage.

By now, Ace was something of a veteran, and his squadmates trusted his orders. They attacked the TIE bombers, even though it left only Ace to keep the other fighters off their tails. He didn't let them down. Ace ignored the fighters attacking him and easily tore through those attacking his wingmates. Eventually he had to call a companion to help with his own assailants, but by then his squadron was well on its way to stopping the TIE bombers. The *Independence* safely hypered away, and Ace's squadron returned to the CRS *Liberty*.

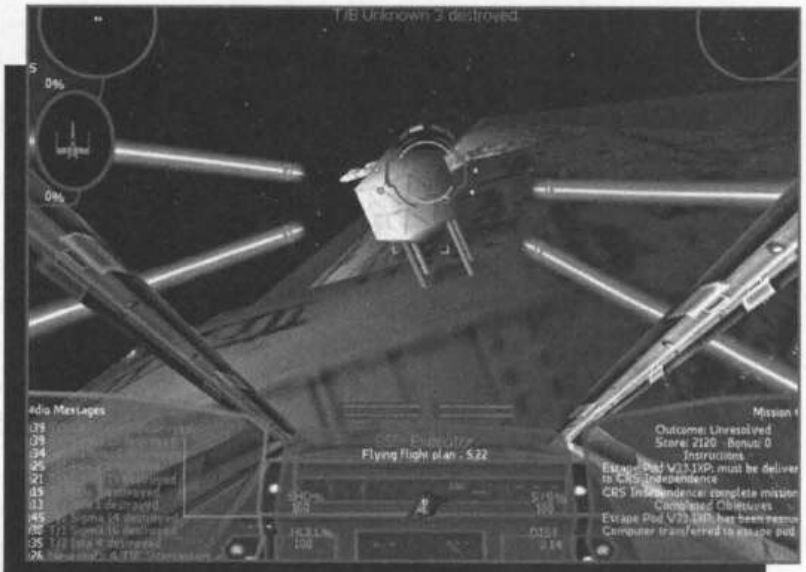


Fig. 10-8. Engaging the *Executor* is a dangerous waste of time.

This time, there was no split decision. Clearly, the Rebels had won the day.

The Combat Simulation

This mission demands superlative dogfighting skills. It's crucial to keep at least a few wingmates alive until the end of the mission, so you won't have to face the final assault alone. To this end, take pains to respond when your wingmates call for help. Don't worry about trying to save the *Razor*; there's nothing you can do. When the escape pod launches, escort it to the Dreadnaught *Mercury*, attacking anything that attacks it.

Once the pod reaches the *Mercury*, help your wingmates destroy any remaining fighters. Once the Dreadnaught makes it to hyperspace, you should leave, too. When you arrive in the next region, turn your recharge rates to maximum to prepare for the coming conflict; you'll want to be at full shields and lasers when the *Avenger* arrives. It will launch TIE bombers to attack the CRS *Independence*, and TIE interceptors to protect them.

Your wingmates are ideal for stopping the bombers, but that means you must keep the TIE interceptors busy—and there are many. Once you eliminate the interceptors attacking your wingmates, you can call one wingmate off the bombers to help with the interceptors attacking you.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to CRV *Razor*.

CRV Razor

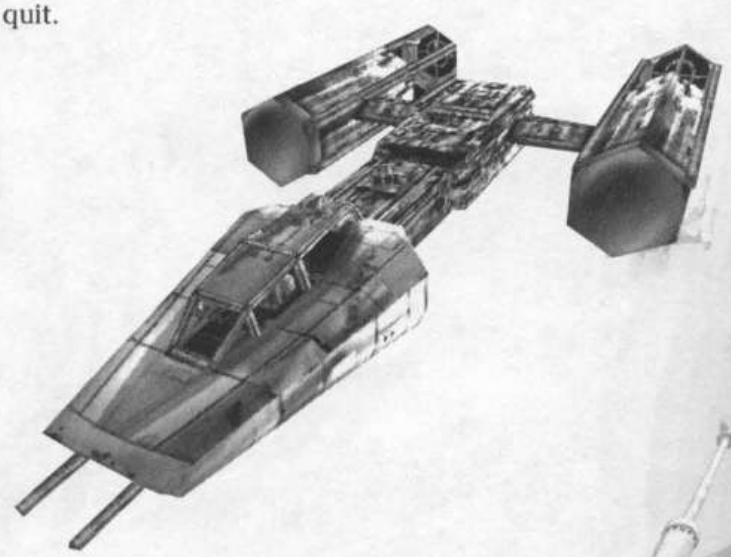
- Dogfight to protect wingmates.
- Protect the escape pod from TIE fighters and interceptors.
- Once the *Mercury* leaves, hyper to CRS *Independence*.

CRS Independence

- Recharge to full lasers and shields.
- When the ISD *Avenger* arrives, send your wingmates after the TIE bombers, while you persecute the TIE interceptors—again, protecting your wingmates.
- Once the *Independence* makes it out, hyper to CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.



Chapter 11
Mustering the Fleet

Protect Alliance–Smuggler Meeting

The galaxy was becoming a very uncomfortable place to live, and even worse for independent businesses. In fact, there were few independent businesses left; most sided with either the Empire or the Rebellion.

Now news of a second Death Star spread throughout the free worlds, reviving memories of Alderaan's demise. Everyone was on edge.

The Empire recently had destroyed a valuable Rebel supply center on Gal Milnor, severely reducing Alliance resources. So the decision to ally with smugglers was no surprise, certainly not to the Azzameens.

General Lando Calrissian was to arrange a meeting between the Rebels and a smugglers' coalition lead by Dunari. But even with these two galactic heroes involved, the Rebels had to take precautions. Smugglers make unreliable allies.

Ace was ordered to fly with a Z-95 group escorting the Rebel delegates. The Z-95s would disguise Rebellion involvement, should Imperials appear. (My own theory is that Ace had damaged so many fighters in recent weeks that Z-95s were all that remained. I do not know that this is true; it is just a theory.)

As Bandit Group, Ace and the other Z-95s left the *Liberty* along with the MUTR *Saloon* (carrying the delegates) to meet Dunari's smuggler coalition.

Dunari arrived at the rendezvous point soon after Ace's group. His LT-3000 *Raw Deal* was there, with four CloakShape fighter escorts. You would have thought Dunari would arrive in a ship with a different name for such negotiations, but I am just a lowly droid, so who am I to say?

The meeting got underway. Ace patrolled the area with the other fighters—but it was a brief patrol. A strike force of raiders entered the area—four Toscan fighters from Fury Squadron, the M-CRV *Vulture*, and two Y-wings *Pirate*. Notice how *their* names are appropriate.

Ace, of course, targeted the Y-wings first. Beyond the fact that it is tactically wise, I think he just enjoys blasting heavy attack ships. Most of the CloakShapes went after the Toscans (Ace's next targets) and the *Vulture*. Ace's Z-95 buddy worked to keep the Toscans off his back.

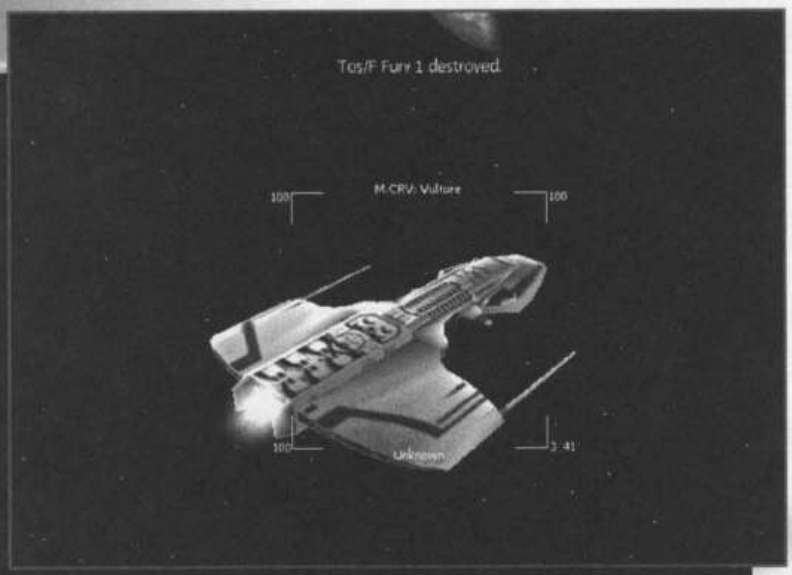


Fig. 11-1. Do not bother with the *Vulture*.

According to Ace, Dunari's CloakShape-piloting security forces were either hotshots or maniacs, because they needlessly engaged the *Vulture* even after it began withdrawing. It is a good thing Ace showed greater restraint, because an Imperial reconnaissance force dropped out of hyperspace just as he returned to the *Saloon*'s vicinity. Ace knew the *Saloon* was a prime target for the Imperials, and he kept his eye on the vessel. Once the Scout craft was destroyed, he went after the next most threatening enemies, the gunboats.

It was a furious fight. Ace recalled the difficulty he had in that Z-95. The gunboats had a huge advantage in terms of durability. But Ace was used to such disadvantages, and finished off the last of the GUNs just as the ISDII *Corrupter* arrived.

The meeting, though rushed, was successful, and Ace covered the friendly ships as they broke up and departed.

The Imperial attack did not succeed, but everyone knew the Empire would try again.

The Combat Simulation

This mission is no problem if you keep in mind that the Z-95 is very fragile. Once the raiders arrive, destroy the Y-wings; they target your mission-critical craft. Have your wingmate cover you if you need help, but don't mess with the Toscan fighters until the Y-wings are gone.

Attacking the M-CRV *Vulture* might not be suicide if you're highly skilled, but it's almost as pointless. Not only is it likely to hyper out before you can kill it, but you'll be way out of position to deal with the Imperial strike force that comes in. When that happens, you must be close to both the *Saloon* and the *Raw Deal*. Save at least four missiles for the Scout craft. If the gunboats pick on you too much, a flare or two will take some of the heat off.

CRS Liberty

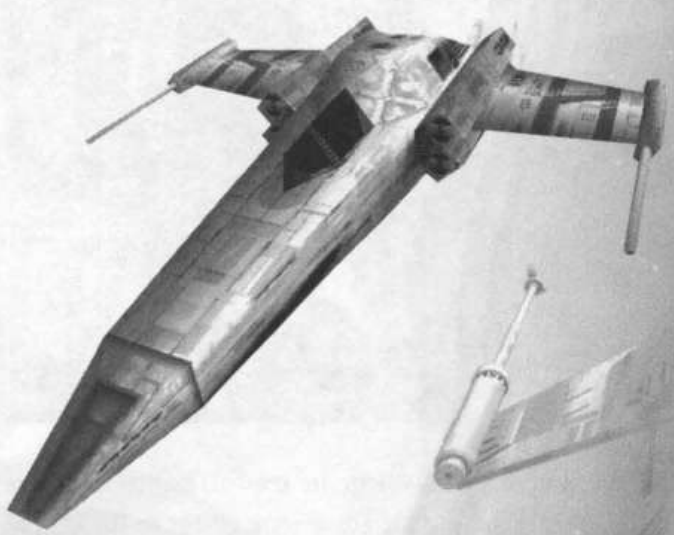
- Hyper to the meeting area.

Meeting Area

- Take out Raider fighters, Y-wings first.
- Don't engage the M-CRV; stick by the mission-critical craft.
- Destroy the SCT. Have your wingmate cover you if necessary.
- Attack the gunboats until the *Saloon* and the *Raw Deal* are safely away.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.



Attack Imperial Convoy

I never trusted the Hurrim and their inclusion in the coalition always troubled me. Call it droid instinct, but the Hurrim's leader, Golov Nakhym, sent chills up my data bus. Now the Alliance was helping the Hurrim in a raid on an Imperial convoy. What a galaxy!

Ace was flying a Y-wing this time, along with three others. The Hurrim showed up with eight Preybird fighters. Together they hypered to PLT/4 *Henlon*, a customs checkpoint in the Nezni system. Ace noted Space Colony *Corvalis* there, as well as the freighter convoy. He took off toward the nearest freighter and readied his ion cannons.

Ace pummeled the freighter, which carried blasters, and disabled it as instructed. He was targeting the next freighter when strange things started happening.

"I could not believe the radio," he said later. "The Hurrim were going crazy shooting civilian vessels. I forgot about the freighters and targeted one of the Preybird traitors."

See what I mean?

Fig. 11-2. Traitors!

It was hectic from this point on. Ace's Y-wing was too slow to enable him to cover all the endangered freighters, so he shifted *all* energy to the engines to compensate.

The friendly MOBs arrived and started docking with the disabled freighters to get the goods. Ace was extremely busy going from threat to threat. The customs platform had launched TIE interceptors and a couple of Skipray blastboats, so he knew time was limited.

After finishing off the last Hurrim traitor, Ace noticed one freighter, a Xiytiar transport, that had not been disabled. Pushing his aging starfighter to its limits, Ace was able to reach it, disable it, and return to protect the MOBs before any were seriously damaged.

Everything turned out OK. The weapons and ammunitions made it to the Rebels and the Hurrim were all toast. Ace claimed—get this—six Preybirds, 11 TIE interceptors, and two Skipray blastboats. Imagine the *assists*.

Busy guy.

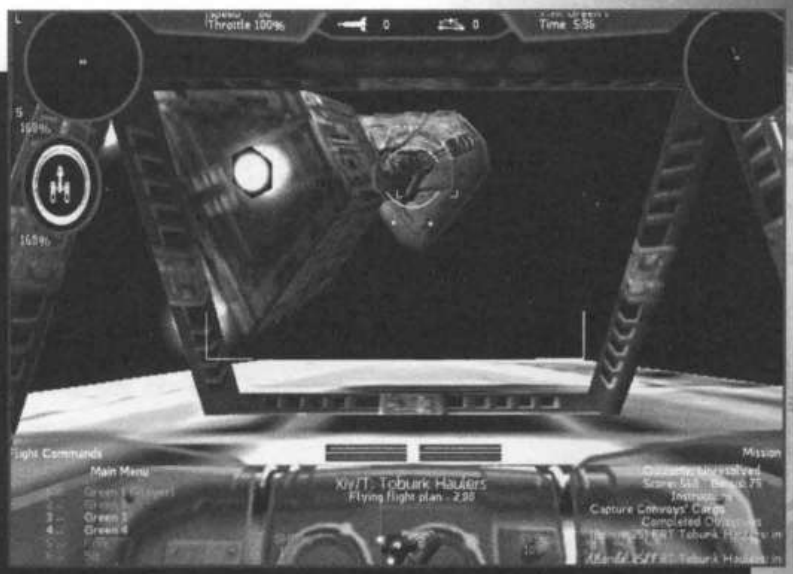


Fig. 11-3. The Stray Xiy/T

The Combat Simulation

Thwarting the Hurrim betrayal is challenging. You're outnumbered, so time is of the essence when defeating the Preybird fighters. Use fully linked guns, and if your target is disabled before it's destroyed, switch to a new target. Make sure your wingmates attack the Preybirds; there's plenty of time to disable the convoy. Focus on the Preybirds attacking convoy ships: if you lose one, it's all over. The map can be useful. If a Pry/F heads for a convoy ship, it's probably attacking. The Xiytiar transport that goes off on its own will need disabling, but deal with the Hurrim first.

Sending a wingmate or two after the TIE interceptors and Skipray blastboat that launch from the platform ensures there are fighters around to protect your Mobquet transports while you disable the Xiytiar. Even so, you'll have to hot-foot it back to the convoy to stop the TIEs once the Xiytiar is disabled. The TIE interceptors are especially vulnerable to ion cannons because they have no shields; use this to your advantage.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the Imperial convoy.

Imperial Convoy

- Attack the Hurrim as soon as they switch sides. Focus on the Preybirds attacking the freighters.
- Send wingmates after the TIEs while you disable any remaining freighter craft.
- Disable or destroy all Imperial fighters, focusing on those that attack your Mobquet transports.
- Once your MOBs are away, hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

■ Enter hangar or quit.

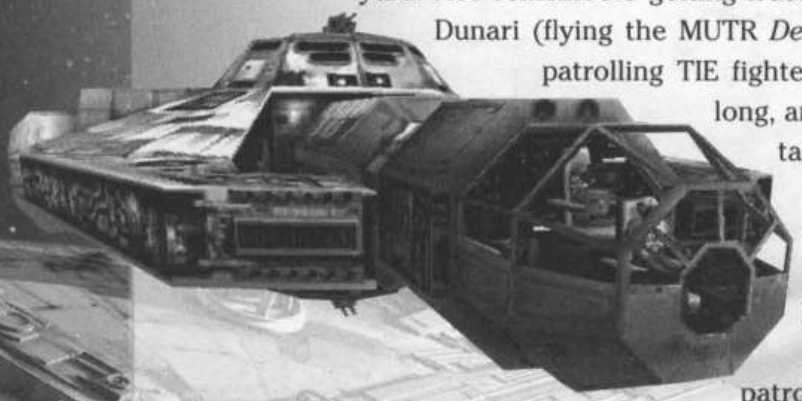
Break Emon Out of Brig

I was becoming perturbed doing maintenance tasks around the Azzameen outpost. It had been a long time since I had seen any action. I am no complainer, but why waste all that valuable combat circuitry? *Show me the action!*

I got my wish. Dunari contacted me and told me to pick up Ace in the *Otana*. Ace was still aboard the CRS *Liberty*, located near the luxury resort casino Dunari's Rest. Dunari needed Ace's help to break Emon out of an Imperial brig at Quesna Base.

Emon in the brig. What a shocker.

First, Ace had to steal a bomb hidden in one of the Tibana gas containers at an Imperial scrapyard. Ace remembers getting frustrated trying to locate the bomb after he and Dunari (flying the MUTR *Deadman's Hand*) arrived at the stockyard. The patrolling TIE fighters would become suspicious if Ace took too long, and he had wasted time already identifying containers of water, durasteel, and food.



Ace got lucky among the pressure tanks. It was there. He slowed and picked it up. Without further delay, he and Dunari headed for Quesna Base. The TIEs never attacked.

The situation at Quesna Base was similar. The patrolling TIEs and SPCs did not suspect my two friends when they hypered in. In fact, the base controllers even radioed them, as if they were expected. I assumed Dunari had arranged the deception, and not an Azzameen, because it seemed to be working.

Ace and I approached the base slowly. Ace knew he had to drop off the *surprise* Pr/Tk container within 1 to 1.5 klicks of the base, or it would detonate too soon and spoil Dunari's rescue attempt.

The explosion was the diversion Dunari needed to slip in and get Emon. It was also the trigger that propelled the patrolling TIEs toward Ace. A fringe benefit was the destruction of the large gun emplacements hovering over the base.

Ace, admirably, turned the turret guns over to me. I had a wonderful time fending off the pursuing TIEs as Ace swooped in to defend Dunari's MUTR. Once he had destroyed them, Ace attacked the lurking SPC. It was a bit tougher, but not tough enough.

Records show that *three* TIEs were destroyed while Ace was attacking these targets. Jabba the Hutt will take up tap dancing before I get credit for those kills.

Anyway, Ace and I had eliminated all the TIEs when Dunari announced he had Emon aboard. The Imperials must have been eavesdropping; the sudden appearance of Imperial cargo tankers and eight assault gunboats was too coincidental.

Ace and I held off the GUNs while the *Deadman's Hand* hypered to safety; two never made it back home.

Dunari's MUTR, carrying Emon, made it out without even one laser burn on its hull. Dunari and Emon praised Ace for his magnificent fighter cover. Did Ace or Dunari bother to thank *me*? Did Emon say, "Hey, thanks for helping save my life, Emkay"?

Not a word.

The Combat Simulation

You can save yourself a lot of time in this mission if you head right for the pressure tanks at the Imperial scrapyards; the bomb is always in one of those. As long as you keep the TIE fighters from destroying Dunari's MUTR *Deadman's Hand* as it docks with the cargo facility, you should have no problem with this mission.

Dunari's Casino

- Hyper to Imperial stockyard.

Imperial Stockyard

- Inspect pressure tanks.
- Pick up bomb.
- Hyper to Quesna Base.

Quesna Base

- Release bomb 1 km to 1.5 km from the facility.
- When the bomb goes off, keep the TIEs off of the *Deadman's Hand*.
- Destroy the SPC from the turret if it gets close.
- Hyper to Dunari's casino once Dunari's MUTR escapes.

Dunari's Casino

- Enter hangar or quit.

Protect Smuggler Retreat

It does not take the Empire long to figure out who is not playing their tune. In that regard, Dunari was tone-deaf. The Imperials decided to put Dunari out of business, if not in carbonite. *Dunari's Rest*, the luxury resort casino, was under Imperial siege.

Ace volunteered for the four-pilot X-wing group assigned to assist Dunari's four CloakShapes in the rescue. A six-pilot B-wing group went along to assault Imperial capital ships. The cavalry was on its way!

Ace and the Rebel reinforcement group emerged from hyperspace to find Imperial forces overwhelming the casino and more of Dunari's CloakShape fighters. A variety of TIE craft swirled around. The presence of TIE bombers and assault gunboats indicated an Imperial desire to destroy the casino itself, and Ace was not unaware of this.

Ace went after the Imperial assault gunboats. The B-wings, bravely, commenced their assault on the Imperial Strike cruiser *Lament*, wisely choosing not to engage the Star Destroyer.

Friendly transports launched from the casino. All were vulnerable and many took substantial damage before their attackers could be stopped. Ace monitored the escaping transports, and had the other X-wings stop the TIE bomber waves from inflicting too much damage on the casino. It was hopeless, though. Everyone, including Dunari, realized the casino was lost. The Imperial force was far superior.

Dunari's personal ship, the *Raw Deal*, made it out, leaving a few fighters to contend with the large Imperial force. The B-wings destroyed the Strike cruiser, and that evened the odds a little—but not enough. Ace decided the *Corrupter* had been a thorn in his side for too long, and attempted an assault on the Star Destroyer's shield towers. He actually managed to destroy them both! I do not think even I could have done a better job.

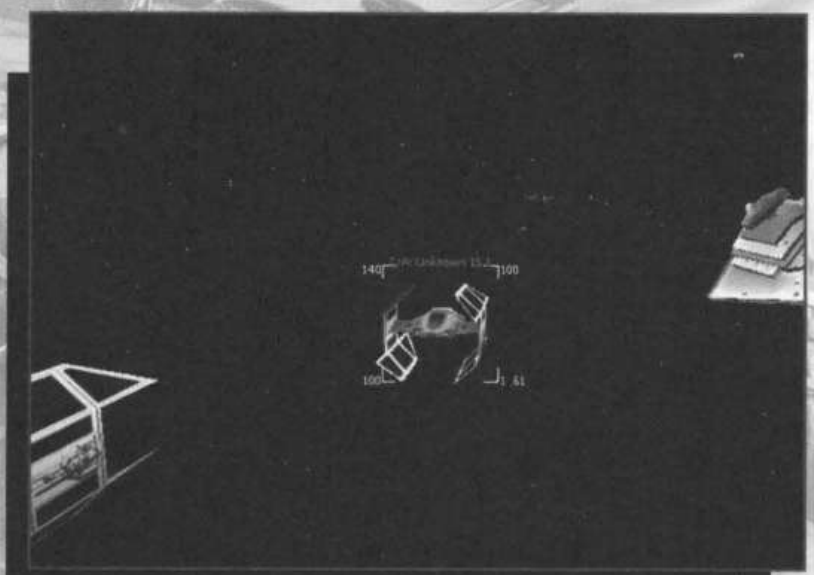


Fig. 11-4. Perhaps now is not the time to destroy the *Corrupter*.

Ace's wingmates had not wanted to engage the Star Destroyer—I cannot imagine why—but they joined the fray when its shields went down. It was looking like they might ruin Admiral Holtz's day when the M/FRG *Cerebus* arrived and began spewing TIE interceptors. Ace told his wingmates to engage them, hoping to buy enough time to finish the job.

It was a decision he would regret for years.

Within moments, he was the only member of his flight group still alive. The *Corrupter* was heavily damaged, but there was no way he could finish it before the apparently *elite* TIE interceptors reached him. It pained him greatly, but he ran for his life.

A week or so afterward, while cleaning up the mess Dunari and his crew had left behind at the Azzameen outpost, I noticed this graffito on the walls: *May Dunari's Rest in peace.*

The Combat Simulation

This mission tests your ability to escort multiple craft. Before the evacuation, you will need to do some warhead defense and take out some gunboats so the casino survives long enough for all craft to launch.

After the evacuation begins, there will be two craft needing protection at any given time. If both come under attack at once, do not be shy about sending your wingmates after the ship in the least amount of trouble. They might not stop the attackers, but they will probably slow them enough for you to take care of the others and get back.

Check your map for new mission-critical craft, and use your target memory locations (F5 through F7). Once the *Raw Deal* safely enters hyperspace, you're free to go. The *Lament* is a relatively easy kill if your anti–capital ship skills are up to par, so you might want to stick around long enough to take it out.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to Dunari's casino.

Dunari's Casino

- Prevent as much damage to the casino as you can by taking out torpedoes and gunboats until the shuttle *Orion* launches.
- Escort the *Orion* and all subsequent craft launched from the casino to their hyper points. The *Raw Deal* is the last to go.
- Destroy the STRKC *Lament*, if you're so inclined.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rescue Smugglers

During the Imperial attack on Dunari's casino, the Hurrim struck, as well. Several of Dunari's coalition board members had been captured; two members who had escaped were being pursued.

Ace and another pilot, in A-wings loaded with 12 missiles and flares, set off to find the escaping shuttle *Merte* carrying the board members and escort it back to the *Liberty*.

On arrival at Camen Spaceport, Ace started running IDs on all area vessels. There were both neutral and friendly cargo craft, as well as the shuttle full of coalition members. A large flight of Preybird fighters arrived—had to be the Hurrim.

The SHU *Merte* was fine for the time being, doing a splendid job of evasive maneuvering. Ace jumped into the fray and, with the superior speed of the A-wing, engaged the Preybirds quickly. He destroyed them quickly, too. The Preybirds were no match for Ace that day, despite attacks from multiple directions.

Ace and the other A-wing pulled alongside the shuttle and followed it to the next hyper point. The three ships emerged from hyperspace in an asteroid field. Ace later remarked how peaceful it seemed there. Flying through a maze of massive asteroids does not strike me as "peaceful," but I guess Ace was comparing it to some of his previous missions.

Ace's A-wing partner spotted the hyper buoy to the *Liberty* first. Normally, Ace would be right on top of things like that, but he was busy spotting something else—the Hurrim MUTR *Bast* and its complement of Preybirds.

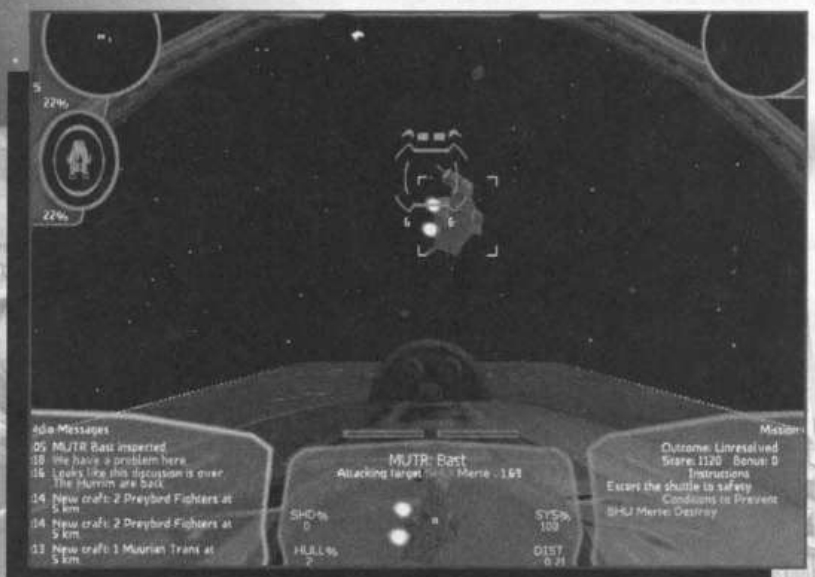


Fig. 11-5. The Obvious Threat

The Muurian transport was the obvious threat. It was a good thing Ace had saved his missiles: they made short work of it. I taught him that.

I wish I could have been there to see Ace maneuver through that environment. Being familiar with his tactic of leading pursuing foes into disastrous situations, I am confident there are some Hurrim Preybirds embedded in a few of those asteroids.

It is the perfect place for them.

The Combat Simulation

This mission has its frantic moments. The Preybird fighters attack the shuttle from multiple directions, so it's important to concentrate on destroying its attackers—and only its attackers—as quickly as you can. Be aware of new craft messages; they're your best indication the shuttle is about to be in trouble.

In the second region, only the MUTR attacks the *Merte*, so save some missiles for it.

CRS Liberty

- Set all recharge rates to maximum. You'll need the energy later.
- Hyper to Camen Spaceport.

Camen Spaceport

- Make haste to rendezvous with the shuttle.
- Prioritize and persecute the Preybirds attacking the shuttle. Your wingmate can cover you, if necessary.
- Once the shuttle escapes, follow it to Adori Drift.

Adori Drift

- Use the quiet time to recharge.
- Attack the MUTR the moment it arrives.
- Finish off the Preybirds.
- Hyper to CRS *Liberty* or quit.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Recover Family Data Core

Thanks to Aeron, I got another opportunity to fly with Ace in the *Otana*. Her sources had revealed the location of the old, discarded Azzameen communications data core. Aeron believed she could slice into this data core and find out why Azzameen security was compromised so often. Ace and Emon were elected to retrieve it.

All the way to Tolig IV Scrapyard, Ace and Emon rambled on about the Viraxos, suspicions of a mole, the Empire—on and on. They even found time to compliment each other on past adventures. And not a single syllable referenced *my* contributions. So typical.

When the *Otana* and the *Andrasta* hypered into the Tolig IV sector, it was quiet.

Ace moved in close to the rows of containers and began his search for the data core. Emon patrolled the area. After identifying everything from furniture to machinery to scrap metal, Ace finally located the data core.

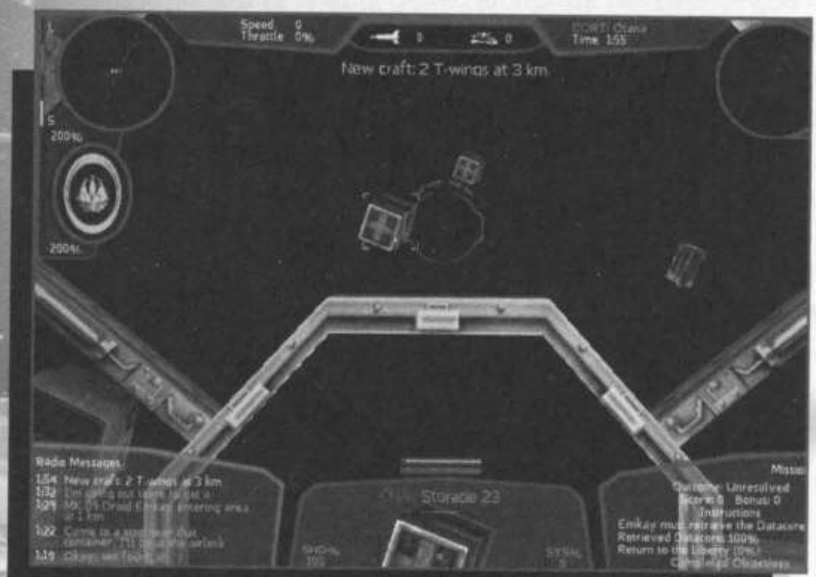


Fig. 11-6. Ah, there it is!

Now came *my* big moment. I knew I would be the one who jumped into deep space to retrieve the data core. I knew humans all too well. But I had no idea that a flight of T-wings would show up just as I leaped into the void.

Emon went after the T-wings as though possessed (I will refrain from comment). Ace linked all the *Otana*'s lasers and took out after the nearest T-wing, leaving me defenseless and floundering in hostile space.

I could go on about how Ace and Emon outflew the T-wings and decimated their entire flight, but the real drama of the situation occurred elsewhere—specifically, with a heroic MK-09 droid on a lone cargo container in the midst of hazardous laser fire.

You can imagine how difficult it is to download data calmly while attached to an easily destroyed container. Laser blasts whizzed past, alarmingly close.

I finished the download and prepared to detach. I suppose I should have targeted Ace first, but I was responding according to orders. So, like any well-programmed droid, I detached myself from the container and sailed off into nothingness.

No Ace. I discovered something interesting at that moment: MK-09 maintenance droids are capable of panic. I sent SOS signals in as many codes as I knew. I find no records of this, but I am convinced I heard Emon telling me to "shut up" as I pleaded for help.

Finally, I saw the *Otana* coming toward me—and rather quickly. As the *Otana* got closer, I hastily scanned my memory banks for reasons Ace might want to ram me. I found no data to support such a theory, so I relaxed.

Then, at the last second, Ace slowed the *Otana* and coasted to within half a klick of my location. Emon thought it was humorous. I boarded without comment.

I knew who the *real* hero was that day.

The Combat Simulation

This mission features some intense dogfighting. The data core is always in the CN/Ks, so there's no need to inspect anything else. The closer you are to the data core container when Emkay launches, the more quickly he'll get there.

The attacking T-wings fit the definition of "vulnerable craft," so using the autoturret at close range is a viable strategy. Nothing attacks Emkay, but it's important to keep the fight well away from him. If you pass within .5 km anytime after he finishes docking, he'll attempt to return to the ship. Because any stray shot could destroy him—and end the mission—this could be inconvenient.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the scrapyard.

Stockyard

- Inspect the CN/Ks.
- Let Emkay out as near the data core as possible.
- Dogfight until all T-wings are destroyed; keep the fight away from Emkay.
- Once Emkay finishes docking and the T-wings are gone, fly to within .5 km of Emkay so he can board the *Otana*.
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Dock with Emon.
- Enter hangar or quit.

Attack Pirate Base

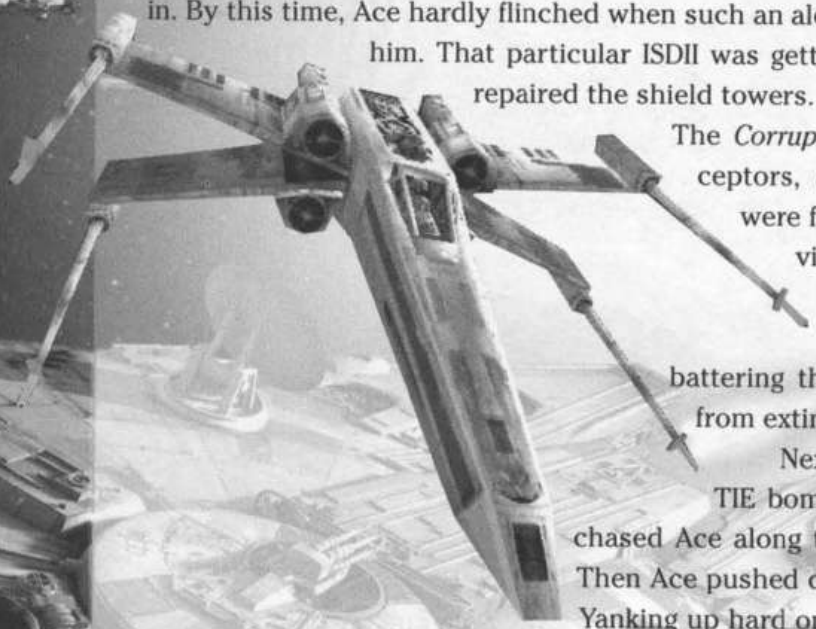
The Hurrim pirates still held a few coalition board members captive at their main base of operations. As soon as the Alliance learned where this was, a plan to rescue the members was initiated.

Ace joined six-pilot B-wing Group Green, accompanied by six X-wings from Red Group. Together with the Rebel FRG *Jericho*, they set off from the CRS *Liberty* to launch a full-scale assault on the Hurrim base. The ATR *Storm Unit* was to launch from the *Jericho*, enter the base, and rescue the members. That each B-wing carried 12 torpedoes meant the pirate base soon would close up shop.

The Rebel assault force hypered into the pirate base sector and sped toward their objectives. The X-wings rushed after the Preybird fighters launching from the base, and the B-wings targeted the base itself.

The pirate M-CRVs *Broadside* and *Plank* were there, too, and Ace set them as his next objectives after the static defenses (laser batteries and W/LNCHRs). Ace was in a destructive mood.

The battle commenced, the Rebel force clearly ruling the day, when the ISDII *Corrupter* hypered in. By this time, Ace hardly flinched when such an alert sounded. In fact, I think it even angered him. That particular ISDII was getting on Ace's nerves. He noticed they had repaired the shield towers.



The *Corrupter* launched waves of TIE fighters, interceptors, and bombers at the Rebels. The Rebels were far outnumbered now, and the fight for survival was on. To lower the odds, Ace turned his attention to the M-CRV *Plank* and sent four torpedoes into its hull. He continued battering the corvette until it was but a laser blast from extinction.

Next, Ace pulled his old trick and lured two TIE bombers close to the corvette. The bombers chased Ace along the corvette's hull, inching closer to him. Then Ace pushed down his B-wing's nose and fired all lasers. Yanking up hard on the controls, Ace pulled the B-wing clear of the resulting explosion. The M-CRV *Plank* and the TIE bombers were gone.

Now Ace joined the other B-wings in a seemingly futile attack against the *Corrupter*. One thing the Empire has never quite understood: you just do not corner a Rebel pilot. Especially one named Ace Azzameen.

Suddenly, to the relief of the overwhelmed Rebel force, Dunari showed up with some CloakShape fighters and the Dreadnaught *Longshot*. To add to the great moment, Y-wing Gold Group arrived. Hurrim leader *Golov Nakym* tried to escape from the base in the SHU *Lendros*. The shuttle flew directly to the ISDII *Corrupter*, intending to dock for rescue.

But Ace did not let that happen. He pulled in close to the *Corrupter* and disabled the shuttle as it was being tractored in. It was close, but good enough for ATR *Storm Unit* to slip in and grab the pirate leader.

As soon as *Storm Unit* moved out of range, Ace and the other Rebels inflicted the final blows to the ISDII *Corrupter*. It was a magnificent explosion, Ace said.

When the battle ended, not a single Imperial craft remained in the area—just a lot of Imperial debris.

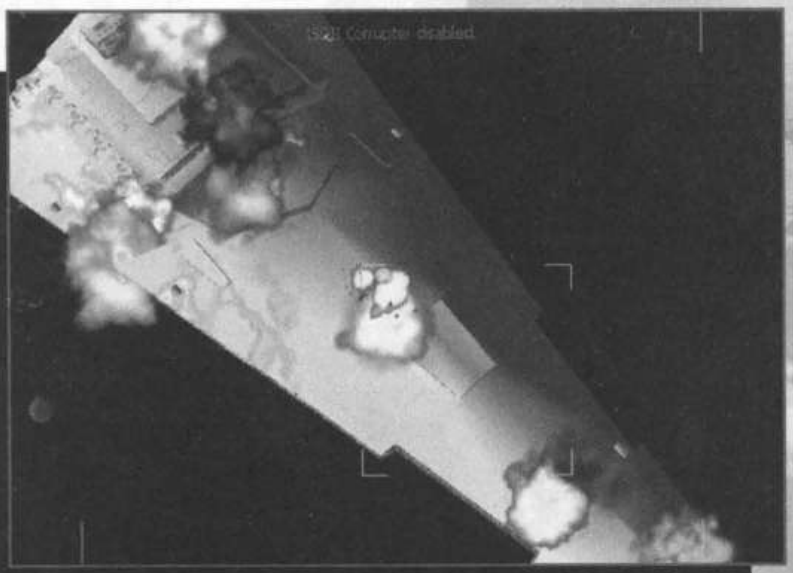


Fig. 11-7. A Magnificent Explosion

The Combat Simulation

This is a large battle, with a number of large targets for you to destroy. Your wingmates are perfectly capable of taking out the asteroid laser batteries by themselves, so you can help dogfight if you choose.

Once the batteries are gone, have your wingmates help you disable the platform. Inspect and disable the shuttle when it launches. Then have your wingmates help you disable the two M-CRVs.

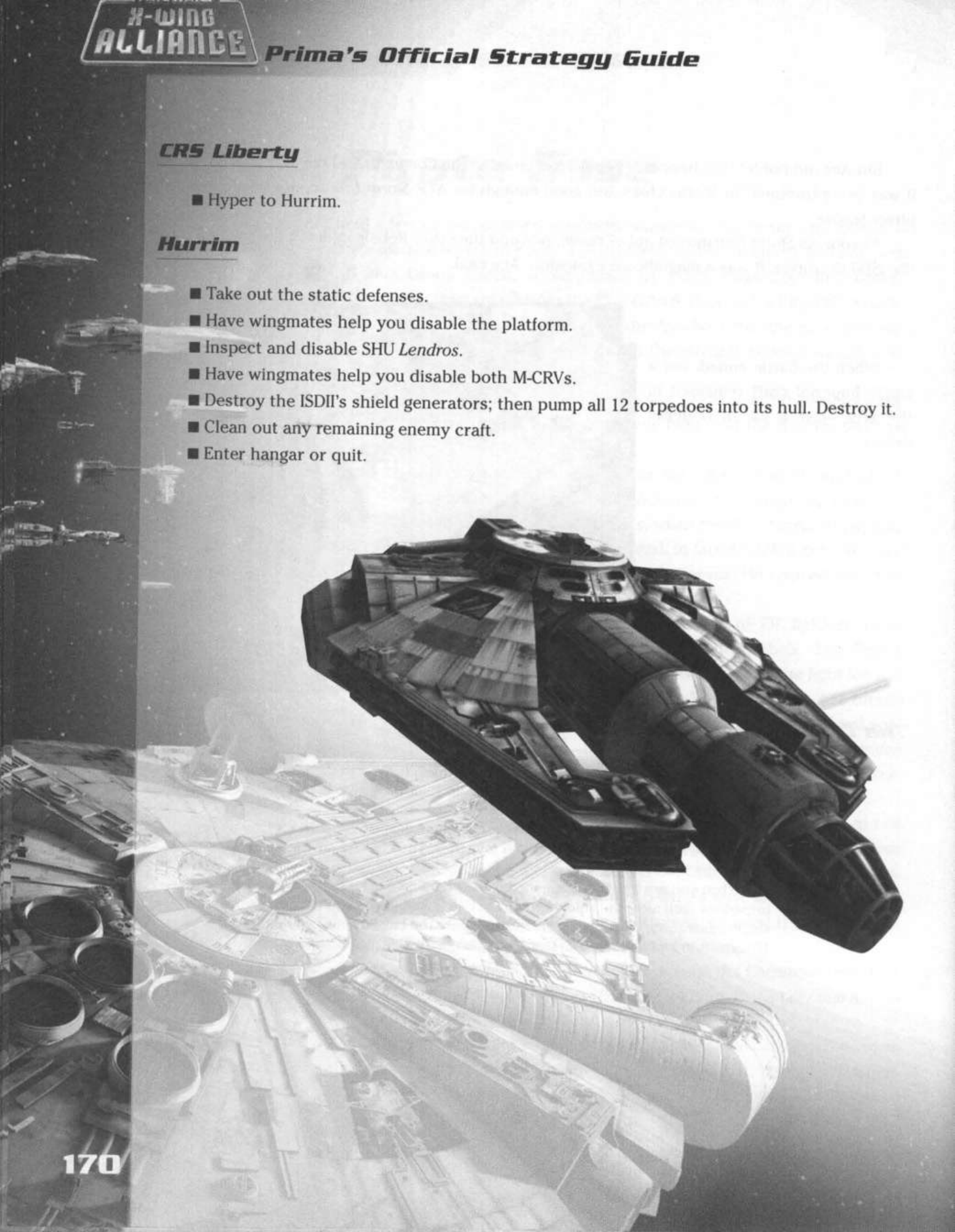
Then you are free to engage the ISDII *Corrupter*. To get a full kill, save your torpedoes until after the shields go down. Use linked lasers and ions to take out the shield generators, tell your wingmates to ignore the target, and then dumb-fire all 12 torps into its hull. Diligent laser fire should earn you the kill, at that point.

CR5 Liberty

- Hyper to Hurrim.

Hurrim

- Take out the static defenses.
- Have wingmates help you disable the platform.
- Inspect and disable SHU *Lendros*.
- Have wingmates help you disable both M-CRVs.
- Destroy the ISDII's shield generators; then pump all 12 torpedoes into its hull. Destroy it.
- Clean out any remaining enemy craft.
- Enter hangar or quit.



Chapter 12
The Darkest Hour

Meet with Bothan Delegation

The Bothans have a reputation as experts in the field of espionage. With reports and discovered data indicating that the Empire was building a second Death Star, confirmation was top priority with the Alliance. And who are you going to call when you need someone to conduct a covert mission?

Certainly not the Azzameens. No, you would call on the Bothan Spynet.

A meeting was arranged between the Alliance and the Bothan delegation, headed by Borsk Fey'lya. Ace and another A-wing Gold pilot were assigned to escort the affair. Ace said such missions were usually "snoozers." Ace was mistaken.

The two A-wings hypered to the rendezvous point to check it ahead of the CRS *Liberty*. The area looked secure, so Ace assumed standard patrol mode. The *Liberty* showed up seconds later. DREAD *Tal'cara* came next, with five Y-wings as escort. Ace was happy to have the extra backup, should something go wrong.

Something went wrong as soon as the shuttle *Jade* left the Bothan Dreadnaught and began its journey to the CRS *Liberty*: a dozen Skipray blastboats popped up on the CMD. The mission was no longer a "snoozer." Ace verified that nothing was headed for the *Jade*, and then changed course to engage the Skiprays.

Ace had just destroyed his fourth blastboat when out of hyperspace came the mercenary *Marauder*-class corvette *Intruder*. The mercenaries have appropriate ship-naming abilities.

Ace had to decide quickly: Keep after the Skiprays? They were attacking the Bothan DREAD, and that was not good. But the SHU *Jade* was out there alone, a vulnerable target. Ace let the Y-wings and Gold 1 take on the Skiprays—they seemed to be handling them well enough now—and rushed to escort the shuttle.

It was the right decision. Flights of IRDs (more mercenaries) appeared and made a direct line toward the shuttle. It made sense; the IRDs were faster and more suited to pursuit.

Fig. 12-1. Protecting the *Jade*

Ace maneuvered between the shuttle and the oncoming IRDs. He turned to meet them head-on and disperse their formation. Again, this tactic worked. Ace destroyed the first fighter on his first pass, and then used the A-wing's speed to keep in laser range of the others. Those IRD pilots never really knew what hit them.

The shuttle docked with the *Liberty* safely, so Ace threw the A-wing into maximum speed and headed toward the Bothan DREAD *Tal'cara*'. As Ace toggled through the available targets, he paused when the Marauder corvette *Intruder* registered. I am sure I know what he was thinking.

Ace left the enemy corvette targeted and headed toward it at full speed. He sent half his missiles, dual-linked, sailing toward the corvette's hull. As he got in laser range, Ace shifted to maximum laser energy and pounded the corvette mercilessly. Ace rarely mentions the return fire during stunts like this, but I can confirm that Ace was not "snoozing" on his way in.

The Marauder corvette exploded after Ace's third pass, which indicates he was not attacking it alone. There was no time to gloat, however, for an escape pod (EE-763) had ejected before the corvette was destroyed. Ace suspected it carried someone important, and radio messages from his tactical officer backed this up. It was a standard model escape pod, not typically equipped with hyperdrive. Just then the *Jade* started its return to the Dreadnaught, so he left the pod alone.

It was another wise decision, because at that moment six Preybird fighters arrived on the scene, and two immediately headed for the *Jade*. Ace rushed to destroy them. He was just finishing with the second Preybird when he received another communication from his tactical officer: one of the Skiprays was headed for the escape pod! By the time he got there, it had already docked, and Ace was forced to attack very gingerly. The Skipray let go of the pod, and Ace blew the Skipray to smithereens.

From there, it was all mop-up. There were some Preybirds and two Skiprays left, which Ace took out himself. I am sure the Y-wing pilots were a little awestruck. Finally, Ace inspected the escape pod, and the SHU *Compassion* was launched to pick it up.

The captured E-POD held a talkative mercenary. The information he provided had the potential to spark a major dispute between the Sullustans and the Bothans: someone was trying to undermine the very foundation of the Rebel Alliance!

The Combat Simulation

This mission can be extremely frustrating. You must fly it a certain way, and even when you know how, it's still very easy to lose. Often, you must drop what you're doing and rush to deal with something that's become more important.

After you've been fighting the Skipray blastboats for a bit, the M-CRV *Intruder* shows up and launches two flight groups of IRDs. Use your map to determine which group of three IRDs is headed for the shuttle, and rush to engage them.

When the *Jade* is safely aboard the *Liberty*, rush back to distract M-CRV fire from the DREAD. Keep this up until the M-CRV launches its escape pod. Do *not* inspect the escape pod when it arrives, no matter how much you may want to. Doing so prompts the launch of the SHU *Compassion*, and you cannot defend both shuttles at once. It is tremendously important you assign it a memory location, however, because you must be able to find it in a hurry later.

Four minutes after the *Jade* enters the CRS, it will begin its journey back to the Dreadnaught. Six Preybird fighters will arrive at the same time; two attack the shuttle, and four attack miscellaneous craft on your team—potentially including you. Again, use the map to determine which fighters are headed for the *Jade*—by the time [A] brought up its attackers, it would be far too late to stop them. You *must* finish with the Preybirds attacking the shuttle as quickly as possible, because a Skipray blastboat bent on rescuing the escape pod will enter right about then.

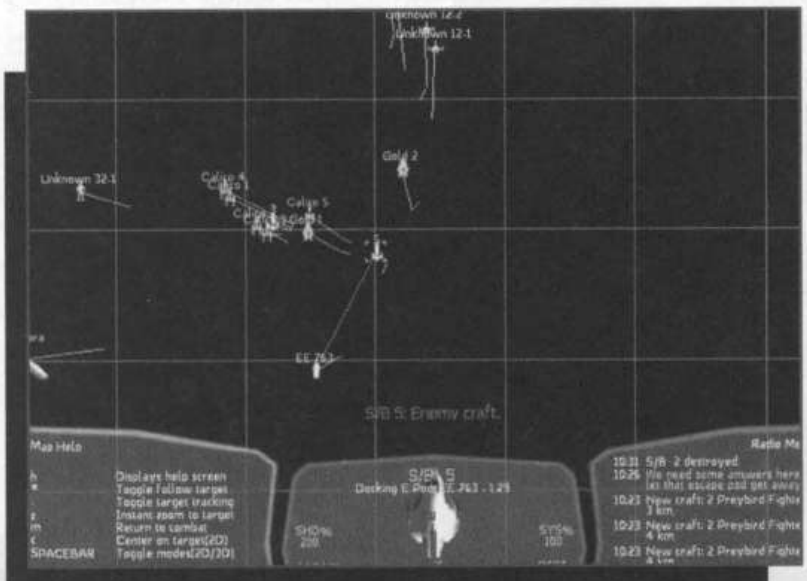


Fig. 12-2. Find the Skipray blastboat before it can dock.

Again, you must use the map to locate the Skipray. You will be glad you assigned the escape pod to a memory location, because the blastboat may have started to dock, obscuring the pod on the map. Do not use a missile to attack the S/B: it will destroy the pod, too. Use cannons to force the Skipray to disengage, and then kill it. There is virtually no margin for error here. If the Skipray gets away with the pod, you lose.

Once the pod has been rescued, you would be wise to destroy all the remaining fighters before inspecting it. This will allow the SHU *Compassion* to complete its mission unmolested.

Fleet

- Hyper to the rendezvous point.

Rendezvous Point

- Fend off Skipray blastboats until the IRDs arrive.
- Find IRDs attacking the shuttle on the map, and intercept them.
- Draw the M-CRV's fire away from the Dreadnaught.
- Once M-CRV is destroyed, assign the escape pod to a memory location. Do not inspect it.
- Intercept the Preybird fighters attacking the shuttle—*quickly*.
- Find the Skipray headed for the escape pod and destroy it with cannons. This can be difficult.
- Clear out all the fighters before inspecting the pod.
- Once the *Compassion* completes its mission, enter hangar or quit.

Locate Mercenary Base

I had another opportunity to fly with Ace on this most unusual mission. Aeron came along in the *Otana*, too. Ace was to dock with a bulk cruiser, identified as the *Redhawk* by the mercenary the Rebels had captured during Ace's last mission.

Once docked, Aeron would download its flight logs to get the coordinates of the mercenary base that was launching assaults in nearby sectors.

The three of us, in the wonderful *Otana*, left the CRS *Liberty* and hypered to the cargo station to find the B/CSR *Redhawk*. The PLT/5 cargo station loomed ahead as we emerged from hyperspace. The *Redhawk* was there, too. The expected escorts were not to be seen, however.

Ace coasted to a stop above the *Redhawk* and initiated docking procedure. When that was completed, Aeron began to download the logs.

Then, of course, three Preybirds showed up. Ace went to the top turret and handily destroyed all three fighters. Aeron was almost finished when another three Preybirds appeared. One exploded frighteningly close to where I sat, and the shields dropped by 10 percent.

Finally, Aeron finished her task and Ace slammed the *Otana* into maximum throttle. We were "outta

there," as Ace likes to express it (I find his grammar deplorable). The other two Preybirds pursued us, only to fall victims to *my* superb gunnery. Ace kept the *Otana* steady and aimed for the mercenary base buoy. We blew right through yet another wave of incoming Preybirds without turning a degree. We hypered out ...

... and into—the middle of an Imperial fleet! Aeron must have downloaded the wrong coordinates. She told Ace to get out fast and return to the cargo station. Ace saw wisdom in her suggestion and aimed for the buoy. The records will show I was alert enough to identify a number of the Imperial vessels gathered there. I noted the ISDIIs *Chimaera* and *Inexorable* and the ISDs *Death's Head*, *Nemesis*, and *Stormhawk*. They did not sound friendly.

After much calculation on my part, and some tricky flying by Ace, we hypered back to the cargo station. Aeron docked a second time to try again. This time, Ace had to go to the turret lasers against attacking Authority IRDs. Ace destroyed two IRDs before Aeron gave the signal to head for the new hyper point. I was somewhat concerned about where we might end up next, but I remained calm and silent.

What happened next came as a complete shock to Ace and Aeron. I was disconcerted for 2.033 seconds, as well. There, right in front of us, was our beloved Azzameen Home Base, renamed Falcon's Nest. Near the base was the B/CSR *Redhawk*. Ace slipped the *Otana* in close for a positive ID, but I was convinced already. No place in the galaxy looks like our old home.

Of course, as Ace and Aeron went on and on about the discovery, four Authority IRD security ships and more Preybirds descended upon the *Otana*. I moved to the turret.

Again, Ace made for the hyper buoy and resisted engaging a superior force. When confronted with a force that would surely have harmed his loyal, beloved, and invaluable MK-09 maintenance droid, Ace threw his personal desires aside and made a hasty escape.

Or perhaps I was reading too much into things.

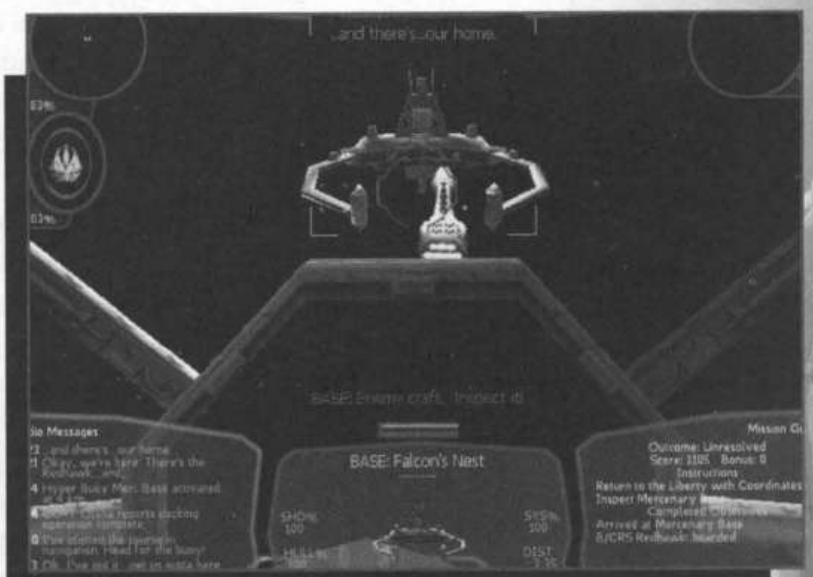


Fig. 12-3. A Horrible Surprise

The Combat Simulation

In the first region, you confront the frustrating prospect of having to defend yourself from the turret while fighters attack from your blind side. Luckily, there is an easy way to circumvent this. As soon as the fighters arrive, disengage from the bulk cruiser and start dogfighting. There is no time pressure for finishing the docking operation; you can come back to it after you've destroyed all the fighters. Just make sure you *do* come back to it, though, or you'll never get out of the region.

The instant you exit hyperspace in the next region, you must dodge turbolaser fire from a Star Destroyer. The Imperial weapons test area can provide you with an opportunity to earn much glory. If you can get the fighters to chase you, you can pick off all 36 of them with tail-gunning tactics. From there, taking out all the Star Destroyers and corvettes from the turret is easy.

Of course, all you *really* need to do is survive for a short time, but why not blacken the Empire's eye when you've got the chance?

Back at the station, it's turret-defense time again. Although it's just as possible as before to disengage from the platform to dogfight, it's not as necessary; the platform's bulk covers your blind side relatively well. Use any method you want.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the cargo station.

Cargo Station

- Dock with the bulk cruiser *Redhawk*.
- Disengage when the Preybirds arrive.
- Dogfight until the Preybirds are gone.
- Dock with the bulk cruiser again.
- Hyper to the flight log location.

Flight Log Location

- Evade *immediately*.
- Stay alive long enough for Emkay to plot a course.
- Hyper to the cargo station.

Cargo Station

- Dock with Plt/5 *Cargo Station*.
- Defend yourself from IRDs.
- Hyper to Mercenary Base.

Mercenary Base

- Inspect BASE *Falcon's Rest.*
- Hyper to the CRS *Liberty.*

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Raid Mercenary Base

The Azzameen siblings were thrilled when the Alliance drew up plans for an all-out assault on the old Azzameen Home Base, now renamed *Falcon's Nest.* I was thrilled, too, because I knew I would be there for the action. It was going to be great to have the old base back in Azzameen hands, although I did not look forward to cleaning up the mess afterward. I knew I was at the top of the list for *that* job.

This time I would fly with Aeron in the *Otana*; Ace was flying with Rebel B-wing Gold Group (four strong). Four Rebel X-wings were to fly fighter cover while the B-wings destroyed the static defenses and disabled the base itself.

I was comfortably positioned in the *Otana*'s upper turret; Aeron was "driving." Emon was right beside us in the *Andrasta*, and there was Ace in a brand new B-wing (soon it would not look so new).

The entire flight of 10 set off for Azzameen Home. When we all hyperspaced in, Ace targeted the gun emplacements right away. They had powerful turbolasers, and taking them out now would make things easier for everybody.

The *Redhawk* was there, and CloakShape fighters and Preybirds were all over Azzameen space. The X-wings charged into the mercenary fighters, and the B-wings went after the gun emplacements.

Aeron and I had a splendid time demonstrating to the Preybirds the advantages of having an MK-09 maintenance droid aboard. Ace cleaned up the sector by eliminating the six gun emplacements. ATR *Storm Unit* arrived, heading in with an assault team to retake the base. In response, it seemed, the M-CRV *Plaque* turned up, and began spewing IRD fighters. Assault transports normally can handle themselves, but Ace could see the massive swarm of IRDs headed for the *Storm Unit* were fully capable of wiping it out. He radioed for assistance.

Fig. 12-4. A Deadly Swarm

Emon, the X-wings, the B-wings, and Aeron and I went after the mercenary fighters in high spirits. Emon, of course, seemed to enjoy himself almost too much: I am happy he was on *our* side. We rescued the ATR with few problems.

When the *Redhawk* exploded, Aeron and I knew Ace had done it again. I did not need to be told that a mercenary fighter or two went up with it. As Ace and the B-wings went after the M-CRV, Aeron and I docked at the base so she could disarm the bombs the mercenaries had wired into the base's system. The *Storm Unit* had cleared the place, but only Aeron knew the computer system well enough to disarm the explosives.

Just after we docked, five Skipray blastboats appeared—headed right for us! I was confident my digitally perfect gunnery skills would protect us, but Ace decided to back me up, anyway. Better safe than sorry, I suppose.

With the blastboats gone, all was quiet. Aeron handily disarmed the bomb with at least 5.745 seconds to spare. I do not know why she appeared so distressed, with so much time left.

Their mission complete, the Rebels left the area. Falcon's Nest was no more. Long live Azzameen Home Base!

The Combat Simulation

There is a lot going on in this mission, and it can be extremely difficult if you do not approach it the right way. ATR *Storm Unit* will arrive as soon as all static defenses are destroyed, so you're best off disabling a gun platform and telling your squadron to ignore it. This allows you to clear out all enemy fighters and ensures that the only craft you must protect are the *Andrasta* and the *Otana*. If Emon takes hull damage, send him home as soon as there's no longer anything attacking him. Otherwise, it's too difficult to keep him alive. Once the fighters are gone, focus on disabling the bulk cruiser.

After you defeat all enemy fighters, take time to recharge your shields and lasers, and then destroy the last gun platform. This summons the *Storm Unit*—and a hostile M-CRV shortly thereafter. The M-CRV launches IRDs against you and the ATR. Send your squadron after the IRDs and concentrate on making those attacking the ATR break off their attack; they can kill the ATR in one pass if you don't stop them. Once your forces have destroyed the IRDs, send your squadron to disable the M-CRV and tell the *Otana* to resume its mission.

With the M-CRV disabled, the only remaining threat is a flight of five Skipray blastboats that hyper in after Aeron docks. They'll try to destroy the *Otana*, so send your squadron after them. Remember to tell the *Otana* to resume its mission after they're all dead.

Rebel Fleet

- Hyper to Azzameen Home.

Azzameen Home

Fig. 12-5. Leave one gun platform disabled.

- Destroy all but one gun platform.
- Have wingmates ignore the remaining gun platform; disable it.
- Destroy enemy fighters, with emphasis on protecting the *Andrasta*, and to a lesser extent the *Otana*. Send Emon home if you must.
- Disable and destroy the bulk cruiser *Redhawk*.
- Recharge shields, and then destroy the remaining gun platform.
- Disrupt the formation of the IRDs attacking the ATR, or it will die in the first pass. Destroy all IRDs.
- Have the squadron help you disable the M-CRV; then have Aeron resume her mission.
- Protect the *Otana* from the S/Bs.
- When the mission is complete, hyper to the Rebel fleet or quit.

Rebel Fleet

- Enter hangar or quit.

Rescue Bothan Spies

Ace's next assignment was a tricky one. An Imperial customs patrol had trapped Bothan spies among some civilian vessels they had detained. The Bothans were returning from the Endor system with data on the second Death Star. It would not be long before the Imperials searched and found the spies.

Ace and three other X-wing pilots were ordered to fly into the sector and ID the vessels with the Bothans. At the same time, they were to attack and drive off the Interdictor there. Three A-wings joined the flight for fighter backup. It was the kind of situation that could get out of hand, and Ace knew it.

The Interdictor *Grappler* was there all right. So was the Imperial Star Destroyer *Accuser* and a large flight of TIE fighters.

Ace tried to slip in near the civilian vessels and do the identification run before the TIEs caught on. They caught up with him about halfway through; Ace dropped everything to engines to speed up the inspection process. (Of course, he could not resist destroying two TIE fighters, first. Typical.)

Ace quickly finished the inspection run, locating the Bothans on the bulk freighter *Tauuni*, medium transport *Tuana*, and modified action transport *Triuna*. He quickly eliminated the remaining TIE fighter pursuers and joined his squadmates in the assault on the Interdictor.

I assume the Imperials lost their reasoning when they saw the Interdictor being pummeled by X-wings. The Interdictor prepared for hyperspace as its shields dropped. At this, three X-wings turned to take on the fighters. With the Interdictor soon to be gone, they wanted to create a diversion and allow the Bothans to hyperspace out.

Notice I said *three* X-wings went after the fighters. Ace was not about to let the Interdictor escape intact. First, he destroyed two of its engines. This distressed the Bothans, I imagine: if Ace was not able to follow up on his plan to destroy the Interdictor, it would be a long time before they would be going *anywhere*. But they do not know Ace like I do. Soon the Interdictor was only debris.

TIE bombers launched from the Star Destroyer at the moment of the *Grappler*'s demise—headed for the Bothans! Ace pointed this out to his wingmates, who were on those bombers like mynocks on a corroded power cable. Right behind Ace, of course.

The X-wings, and Ace, continued tangling with the TIEs until all civilian ships had left the area. When they got the signal to follow the last civilian cargo vessel into hyperspace, Ace stayed behind to fight the ISD *Accuser*.

That was a little droid humor. Ace actually followed his Rebel comrades to the CRS *Liberty*. In one piece.

They had rescued *all* the Bothans!

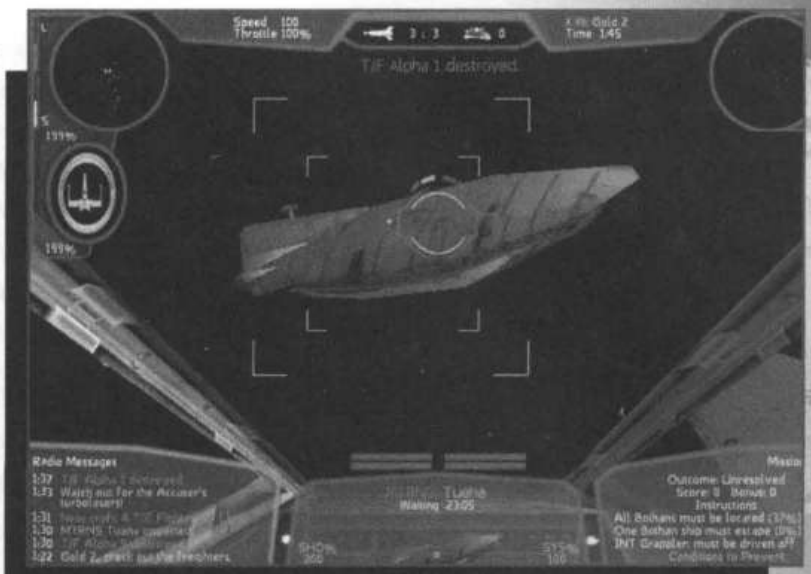


Fig. 12-6. The MTRNS *Tuana* is the Bombers' first target.

The Combat Simulation

This mission allows for varying degrees of success. At least one Bothan freighter must escape. To find the Bothans at the beginning, you need only inspect the bulk freighters, the medium transport, and the modified action transport *Triuna*. After that, you must clear the fighters attacking you so you can go destroy the Interdictor. Once it's gone, TIE bombers will target the medium transport, so watch for them.

The first wave of TIE bombers poses the only real threat to the escaping freighters, other than the ISD, because the other Rebel fighters do a fine job of keeping the rest at bay. This allows you to distract the *Accuser*. Many pilots feel destruction is the only adequate form of distraction. Although that's not the case here, it's definitely possible to "distract" the ISD to death if you start with the shield towers. You're free to go once any freighter makes it out.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to the civilian convoy.

Civilian Convoy

- Inspect both FRTs, the MTRNS, and the M/TRN *Triuna*.
- Destroy the TIE fighters attacking you.
- Destroy the INT *Grappler*.
- Immediately intercept the TIE bombers attacking the MTRNS.
- Distract or destroy the ISD *Accuser*.
- When any or all freighters make it out, hyper to CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

■ Enter hangar or quit.

Steal Imperial Shuttle

I remember this mission well. It was the first time Ace and I flew together as a *Rebel* team. The Alliance needed someone to slip past the Imperial Golan III Station; avoid patrolling TIE fighters; jump in-system to Imperial Colony Outpost 327; dock inside the outpost; drop off a team of commandos to steal an Imperial shuttle; call in Rebel Rogue Squadron to come start a fight with the TIEs, and finally escort the stolen shuttle to the *Liberty*.

Ace was perfect for the job.

Ace took the *Sabra*, to be less conspicuous. I agreed. An X-wing with Rebel insignias and striping might be inappropriate.

Off we went to the Zhar system and Golan III Imperial Customs Station. Ace noted and tracked the TIE fighter patrols as he moved closer to the station. The customs officials cleared us, but I thought Ace would blow our cover with his subtle maneuvering to stay out of identification range of the patrols. The presence of the STRKC *Scythis* made the situation no less tense. It went fine.

At the precise moment, Ace engaged hyperdrive. We emerged in the area of Colony Outpost 327. Ace kept up our "innocent trader" ruse and slowly guided the *Sabra* to the hangar entrance. We entered unhindered.

Fig. 12-7. Inside Outpost 327

Ace brought the *Sabra* to a complete stop inside the four-way hangar bay. Shuttles were all around us. Ace started searching for the *Tydirium*, which carried the codes for landing at Endor. After we found it, the commandos disembarked to claim it.

I noticed CORT YT-2400 *Fiery Dawn* parked and blocking an exit chute. I hoped Ace would choose a different exit. Ever flown through an exploding transport? Common occurrence with Ace.

Finally, the commandos were ready to remove the shuttle. Ace made the call to Rogue Squadron and, once more, the "debris hit the turbos."

We heard the fight begin outside. The SHU *Tydirium* slipped out of the hangar. Ace knew the Imperials would spot the shuttle and send a reception party. As Ace exited the hangar, he just happened to fly past the hangar from which TIE bomber Group Gamma launched.

I need not tell you Ace made short work of those TIE bomber squadrons. I probably do have to mention that I was of significant assistance; otherwise, you would not learn of it at all.

Ace stuck close to the shuttle as the ISDII *Judicator* continued to launch TIE fighters and interceptors. Rogue Squadron destroyed the TIEs rapidly, but a few still managed to catch up to us. It was the last thing they did.

We got the SHU *Tydirium* back to the Rebel fleet. The shuttle was in excellent condition; the *Sabra* had taken some nasty damage.

Just more work for the lowly maintenance droid.

The Combat Simulation

The first part of this mission represents a change of pace. It's important not to be inspected, and that means active enemy craft can never come within .5 km of the *Sabra*.

The first customs checkpoint should be easy. Just fly along beneath the Imperial's sphere of operations, angling up toward the hyper point once you have the coordinates. Keep a careful watch over the nearest enemy inspection craft (using R).

The next region is slightly trickier. TIE interceptors from Beta Squadron will inspect you without fail if you simply head for the SC/2; you must fly in level with the bottom of the Space Colony's lower spire, and then angle up when a shuttle shows up as the nearest target. Taking the time to store the SC/2 in one of your memory locations will save some frustration when you're ready to dock.

Once you've located the SHU *Tyderium*, dock with the station and wait. And wait. After about two minutes, the docking operation will be complete, and you can use Shift S or the Flight Orders MFD to send for reinforcements. Go to full-throttle, drop everything to engines, and exit the station. Numerous TIEs pounce on you immediately; hence the necessity for moving at full speed. As you evade, watch your Message Log MFD for three TIE bombers to arrive. They'll attack the shuttle, so destroy them before they can. Then destroy the next wave, and the next. By then the *Tyderium* should be entering hyperspace.

Take care. The TIE bombers will switch to their next target once the shuttle leaves—and you're it.

CRS Liberty

- Hyper to Imperial Customs Station Golan III.

Imperial Customs

- Fly far below the Golan III, staying as far from the TIEs and SPCs as you can.
- With that in mind, hyper to Zhar Outpost.

Zhar Outpost

- Fly in low to avoid the TIE interceptors.
- Assign SC/2 to a memory location.
- Inspect all shuttles inside the SC/2 (use [O]).
- Dock with SC/2.
- When the docking operation is complete, call for reinforcements.
- Exit SC/2 at maximum speed, and evade the TIEs attacking you.
- Destroy the TIE bombers when they launch, before they can destroy the shuttle.
- After the shuttle escapes, hyper to the CRS *Liberty*.

CRS Liberty

- Enter hangar or quit.

Escort Rebel Fleet

It was evident a major event was building in the galaxy. The Alliance was consolidating its resources and assembling a single, powerful fleet. The Empire attacked rebel bases and installations constantly and attempted to trap elements of the growing Rebel fleet while they were in disparate, vulnerable groups.

Thus, Ace was called on to pilot one of an escort flight group of four A-wings assigned to help the Rebel fleet assemble in the Sullust system.

The A-wings left the CRS *Liberty* and hyperspaced to the *Defiance* and its group. The Rebel group included the FRG *Valiance*, the CRV *Masanva* and the MTRNS *Tuima*. Ace and the other A-wings moved into patrol positions.

Moments later, the Imperials arrived. The CRKC *Xerxes*, the VSD *Vagrant*, and the CRKC *Nexus* all entered the area emitting waves of TIE fighters and bombers. TIE interceptors followed within seconds. It was obvious the Imperials were intent on destroying the *Defiance*.

Again, Ace wisely chose to pursue the TIE bombers first—they could inflict the most serious damage—catching up and showing them what he had learned about shooting targets in tight formation. It was a lesson the bomber pilots would not take back to their hangar.

The A-wings kept the Imperial fighters at bay long enough for the Defiance Group to escape into hyperspace. Imperial assault gunboats arrived too late to make any difference.

Ace's group followed the Defiance Group to the next rendezvous location and was forced to go right into action. Already attacking the other Rebel group, including Admiral Ackbar's flagship *Independence*, were waves of TIE bombers, fighters, interceptors—the usual suspects. Their sources were the ISDII *Immortal* and the VSDIIs *Protector* and *Vanguard*—not exactly tug-class opposition.

The battle raged for an unusually long time, due to the number of fighters involved. The Imperials suffered more losses, but they had more to lose.

At last, the Rebel capital ships signaled their jump into hyperspace. Ace and the other Rebel pilots followed as quickly as they could. In a dogfight, disengaging puts a fighter pilot at an immediate disadvantage.

Ace's group hypered in to the Sullust system, and the largest gathering of Rebel capital ships in history. What a sight that must have been. Ace told me later that he even saw the famous *Millenium Falcon* pull into a hangar!

I was sorry I missed this one.

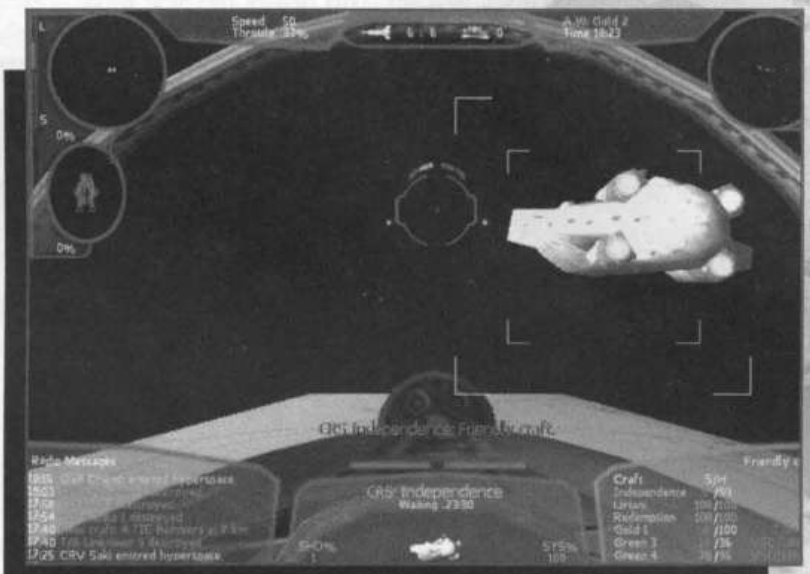


Fig. 12-8. The *Independence* has seen better days.

The Combat Simulation

This is unquestionably your most difficult mission thus far. Getting through it requires endurance, consummate dogfighting ability, and no small amount of luck.

The first part can be made somewhat easier if you use one simple trick: don't destroy the last TIE bomber in a wave; just make it withdraw and tell your wingmates to ignore it. This lets you focus on the TIE fighters and interceptors, and keeps your wingmates alive. It also makes that first wave of bombers something less of a priority—a good thing, because it means you can clear some of the heat off of yourself. Best of all, you may never even see the gunboats.

You'll be ecstatic you could make even part of this mission easier once it comes time to defend the *Independence*. This requires near-perfect dogfighting, especially when it comes to surviving to intercept the bombers. Strategies exist for making things easier, but there are no guarantees.

It helps to know that craft in this area are arranged in 12-ship squadrons broken into flight groups of four ships each. This is important, because as your forces destroy each 33-percent increment of a squadron, a flight group of four from the next squadron is released. Thus, at any given time, nine to 12 of each type of craft (strike and superiority) will be out and about.

You're probably better off if you ignore the first wave of bombers. They're too distant for you to stop their warheads, and the sooner they die, the sooner more come to launch more warheads. Letting the first batch go also allows you to get rid of some pesky TIE fighters that can make your life difficult.

As soon as you're warned about more TIE bombers launching from a Star Destroyer, disengage from the superiority craft and go for the bombers. Avoid destroying one or two bombers per flight group; instead, make them withdraw by bringing their hull rating below 25 percent. This delays the next wave of strike craft for many valuable seconds. Keep a constant eye on your Message Log for newly launched TIE bombers, and persecute them as directed. With skill, heart, and a constant awareness of the combat environment, you just might get through this one.

One more thing: stay ready to evade *immediately* upon exiting hyperspace after mission complete, or you're likely to smack dead into the *Independence*. Make sure you have enough shields to withstand a few seconds of engine wash, as well.

Sullust

- Hyper to the Defiance.

CR5 Defiance

- Clear out some of the TIE fighters and TIE interceptors, while keeping an eye on the TIE bombers.
- Intercept the TIE bombers and destroy all but one.
- Force the last TIE bomber to withdraw by bringing its hull down below 25 percent. Have your wingmates ignore it.
- Destroy the remaining superiority fighters.
- Wait for the *Defiance* to hyper out, then hyper to the Sullust system.

Sullust

- Hyper to the *Independence*. (Make haste, because the attack on the *Independence* began the moment you arrived in this region.)

Independence

- Ignore the first wave of TIE bombers.
- Dogfight with TIE fighters until the next group of four bombers is launched.
- Intercept the TIE bombers; have your wingmate cover you.
- Alternate between bombers and superiority craft until the *Independence* makes it out.
- Hyper to the Sullust system.

Sullust

- Avoid crashing into the *Independence*: you've been warned.
- Enter hangar or quit.

Family Reunion

An urgent call from Uncle Antan to all Azzameen family members brought Ace and me together again. Antan had a lot of explaining to do. Ace, Aeron, and I, in the *Otana*, met with Uncle Antan and Emon at Azzameen Home Base.

Let me express my displeasure with the treatment I received from the Azzameens as we hovered outside their base. In the midst of conversation, they *intentionally* shut me down—reckless and rude. That is all I have to say.

When they finally reactivated me, I learned Ace's father Tomaas and brother Galin were still alive! I was overjoyed. Tomaas always has treated me with the utmost respect, unlike his offspring.

Both were incarcerated on a holding station orbiting the planet Kessel. Ace, Aeron, Uncle Antan, and Emon would have to "sneak" in and rescue them. I rolled my optical sensors at that. Anyway, Ace followed the *Andrasta* and Antan's M/TRN *Big Score* to Kessel.

Uncle Antan assured us everything would go smoothly, and for a while, it did. Ace pulled in close to G/3 Kessel Station and docked. Aeron quickly linked up to the station's computer system and began searching the main registry for the location of her father and brother. We needed to know which of the six C/F2 holding cells they were in. We were anxious to see Tomaas and Galin alive and well again.

It was not to be.

The ISDII *Devastator* suddenly appeared near the station. Waves of TIEs of all types swarmed the space around us. The Imperials called for our surrender. It smelled like a trap.

Confirming the trap theory, the Imperials began to communicate with Uncle Antan—like an ally: the traitor was *Uncle Antan*! He had sold out his own family (not to mention an innocent MK-09 maintenance droid). It was a grim moment.

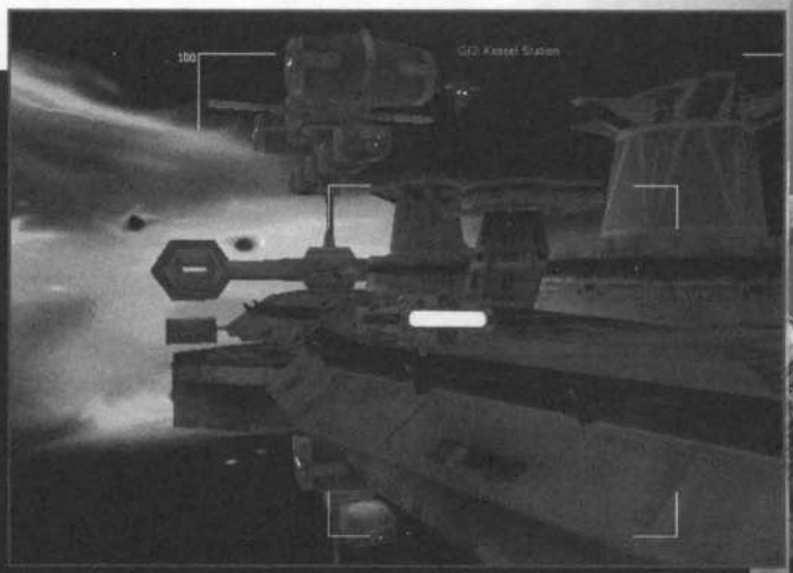


Fig. 12-9. Kessel Station, and the Maw

The term *surrender*, however, is not in the Azzameen dictionary.

I frantically tried to calculate a course, but the Maw—the series of black holes between us and where we wanted to go—made it difficult. I gained a new respect for spice smugglers.

Emon was twisting and turning with interceptors already. Aeron and I busied ourselves with determined TIEs from all directions, and Ace maneuvered like a madman. It looked hopeless.

Dunari's voice was like music to the side sensors. From his MUTR *Dead Man's Hand* he announced he had the escape hyper point coordinates and suggested we all use them as quickly as possible. Ace actually resisted continuing the engagement with the superior force. There was hope for him yet. Emon? Hopeless. But even he would not stay at Kessel alone.

We arrived at an Imperial ore-processing plant in the Kessel asteroids. His uncle's betrayal must have shaken Ace to his core; he was in no mood to fight. Instead, he took the *Otana* to its maximum speed. I was able to deter the TIE advanced from pursuit from within cannon range. As we neared the hyper point, more TIEs launched from the station. Again I unleashed my own special brand of "persuasion," and we reached the hyper point safely.

It was a sad day for the Azzameens.

The Combat Simulation

This mission is a refreshing walk in the park after what you went through in the last one. The autoturret makes mincemeat of the unshielded TIEs at Kessel, and once the hyper buoy activates, the *Otana* is fast enough to outrun its attackers. Tail-gunning tactics are appropriate.

Similar techniques will work in the Kessel asteroids. If you dump everything to engines, you can outrun the TIE advanced easily, and the static defenses pose little threat to you at that speed. Just aim for the hyper point, jump in the turret, and go.

Rebel Fleet

- Hyper to Azzameen Home.

Azzameen Home

- Hyper to Kessel.

Kessel

- Dock with Kessel Station.
- Stay alive long enough for a course to be plotted.
- Hyper to Kessel asteroids.

Kessel Asteroids

- Outrun opposition to the hyper point.
- Hyper to the Rebel fleet.

Rebel Fleet

- Enter hangar or quit.

Chapter 13
The Battle of Endor

Phase 1

The entire Rebel fleet was gathered in the Sullust system for the coming battle near the planet Endor. It had been confirmed: the Empire was indeed constructing a second Death Star, and it was nearing completion. A full-scale attack on the second Death Star could not be postponed. The great Battle of Endor was about to begin.

The second Death Star's deflector shields were operated from a moon at Endor; its own were not yet functional. For the attack on this Death Star to succeed, then, we had to destroy the shield generator on that moon and bring down those deflector shields.

The heroes of Yavin—Princess Leia, General Solo, and Commander Skywalker—lead a commando team on the moon to destroy this generator. In the meantime, Rebel fighters from the fleet readied themselves for the attack. A large Imperial force was not expected; the Empire supposedly did not know the Alliance was aware of the new Death Star.

Ace was the only Azzameen to participate in this great battle. And what a role he played: Ace was assigned to the *Millennium Falcon*, with General Lando Calrissian!

Ace had me doing maintenance work on the *Otana*. I was less than pleased to be left behind on the expedition to obliterate the second Death Star.

"Gener ... er, Lando asked me if I knew how to reattach a thrust vector magnet in midflight."

It was Ace, on his way out. If he was trying to make me forget about being left behind by blathering about thrust vector magnets, he was not succeeding.

"He muttered something about medical adhesive tape and packing foam. I told him that I didn't, but that I knew someone who did. Care to come along?"

Did I care to come along?! I was going to get the chance to destroy a Death Star!

Ace would help, of course.

On Admiral Ackbar's command, the massive Rebel fleet hyperspaced to Endor. Squadrons of Y-wings, B-wings, A-wings, and Commander Wedge Antilles' X-wing Red Group poured into the Endor system and charged after their designated target. The second Death Star awaited them, looming eerily in the space above Endor. What an awesome sight.

General Calrissian gave another order.

"Pull up, all craft pull up!"

He had discovered the shield protecting the second Death Star was still working. Many waves of TIEs appeared suddenly and sped toward the outnumbered Rebel ships.

"It's a trap!" Admiral Ackbar announced.

With an Azzameen along, what did they expect?

Ace took control of the *Falcon* as General Calrissian gave orders to the rest of Gold Group. The Rebels had to buy more time for the commando team on the moon to destroy the shield generator. Ace maneuvered the *Falcon* well and his marksmanship was in top form. He remembered everything I taught him, obviously.

General Calrissian was the first to see the TIEs heading for the medical frigate *Redemption*. If the Imperials destroyed it, or the CRS *Independence*, it was over. The loss of so many important people would be a deathblow to Rebel morale.

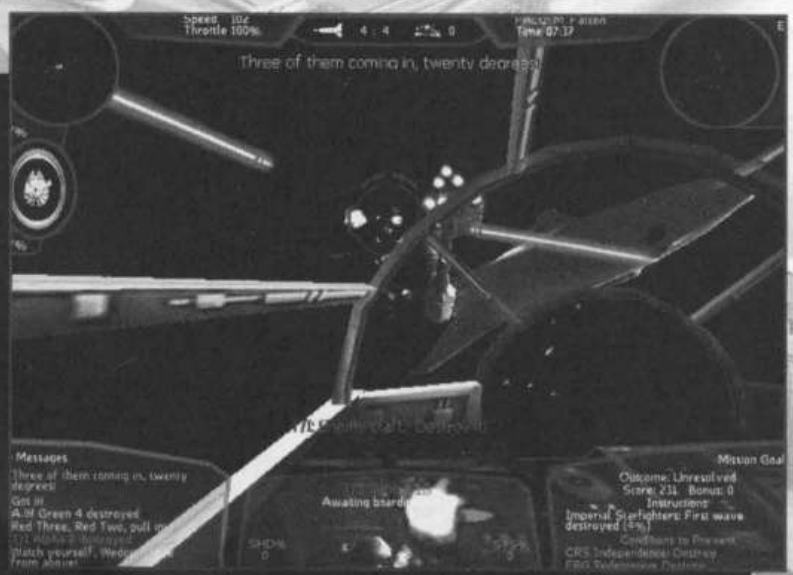


Fig. 13-1. Protect the *Redemption* at all costs!

Ace threw the *Falcon* in the direction of the *Redemption* (it was closest) and targeted the TIEs attacking it. Ace broke up their formations in short order, thus softening the blow to the Rebel frigate. My turret gunning was impeccable, as always. I hoped General Calrissian was paying attention.

It was not long (9.26 minutes) before there were no Imperial fighters in the immediate vicinity. The *Redemption* and the *Independence* were out of harm's way—for the time being.

But time was running out for the ambushed Rebel fleet.

The Combat Simulation

The "Battle of Endor" has four parts. The first involves protecting the *Nebulon B*-class frigate *Redemption*, clearing the Imperial fleet's fighter screen in the process. The key to winning this mission is to assign the *Redemption* to a memory location and monitor its status continually using [A].

Try to move in behind groups of TIEs headed for the *Redemption* and destroy them while their attention is focused elsewhere. Check the map occasionally; there might be one or two dogfights happening out on the fringe, and it's best to send wingmates to deal with them before time runs short.

Sullust

- Mission time limit: 10 minutes.
- Hyper to Endor.

Endor

- Protect FRG *Redemption* from fighter attacks.
- Destroy 100 percent of the fighter screen.

Phase 2: That Thing's Operational!

Ace refueled the *Millennium Falcon* on the *Independence* and wasted no time in returning to the huge melee. Just as the *Falcon* left the hangar, there was a massive explosion not far ahead: the CRS *Liberty* had been destroyed. The Death Star's superlaser was operational!

At first, Admiral Ackbar believed it would be best to retreat and save as much of the fleet as possible. General Calrissian convinced him otherwise: an opportunity to destroy the Death Star would not come again. The Empire was evil, corrupt, ruthless, and extremely abusive to droids—but not stupid.

So it was settled. The assault would continue a while longer in hopes the shields would come down soon.

General Calrissian ordered the Rebel fighters to make a full attack on the Imperial Super Star Destroyer *Executor*, Darth Vader's command ship. It was a daring, if reckless, decision, just the sort of attack Ace liked.

Ace pulled in close to the *Executor*, avoiding its turbolaser fire. He kept the lasers firing constantly as he swooped in and targeted the two towers on the main bridge. Then he dumb-fired all missiles into both. His gratuitous use of explosives would have made Emon proud. Shortly thereafter, Green Leader rammed his critically damaged A-wing into the bridge.

Fig. 13-2. There goes the first shield generator.

The combined force of the explosions inflicted enough damage to send the *Executor* veering out of control. Ace deftly maneuvered the *Millennium Falcon* out of the SSD's way as it tilted, turned, and crashed into the Death Star. The resulting explosion was blinding.

Had the tide of battle turned?

Not yet. The Death Star's shields were still up.

The Combat Simulation

The second part of the Battle of Endor is straightforward: destroy the shield towers on the SSD *Executor*. Fighters will harass you during the attempt, so don't hesitate to use the autoturret.

Endor

- Mission time limit: 10 minutes.
- Destroy shield towers on SSD *Executor*.

Phase 3: Shields Are Down!

The battle raged outside the *Independence* while Ace docked again for refueling. Rebel losses were being called in continually, as Ace waited.

Then, refueled and rearmed, Ace launched from the *Independence* into the swirling battle without so much as a second's hesitation. The *Millennium Falcon* rejoined the fighters in their attempt to protect the Rebel capital ships until the commando team on the moon of Endor completed its task.

At last, General Calrissian gave the word:

"Shields are down!"

Admiral Ackbar gave the order to commence with the attack on the Death Star's main reactor. First, however, the Rebels (and Ace) had to blast a hole through the Imperial reserve fighter screen protecting the entrance into the Death Star's interior.

Imperial TIE fighters and interceptors swarmed over the attacking Rebel force. Ace continued to display outstanding fighter skills. (Later he told me he secretly had wished the *Otana* had been along. I suppose it was his way of saying he finally appreciated the job I do, keeping the old girl running up to specifications. "Medical adhesive tape and packing foam," indeed.)

I must admit, the thrust vector magnets never once detached. I may have underestimated the Wookiee's skill at field repair.

Ace continued dueling with the TIEs as he worked the *Millennium Falcon* closer to the Death Star. The ISDII *Vehement*, however, threatened the Rebel plan as it moved in to support the TIE fighter screen.

If Emperor Palpatine had known Ace personally, he never would have dangled a capital ship in front of him. Ace can not resist them.

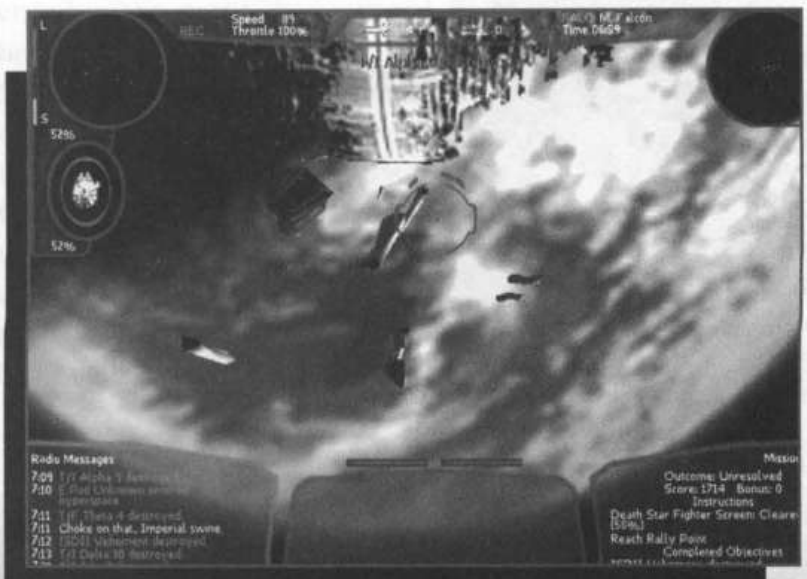


Fig. 13-3. All That Remains of the *Vehement*

When nearby Rebel pilots saw what Ace was up to, they joined in. The ISDII *Vehement* took a tremendous beating in a very short time. The defending TIEs aided the Rebel goal with every shot they missed. The *Vehement* exploded, leaving nothing behind but history.

The Imperial fighter screen had been breached, and Admiral Ackbar signaled the next phase of the attack. Rendezvous Buoy *Rally Point*, at the Death Star entrance, appeared on the CMD. Ace turned the *Falcon* toward it and pushed the throttle to full. He had only seconds to get within 1 km of the buoy, or he would lose the chance to enter the Death Star's interior.

As Ace neared the tunnel entrance, he prepared himself mentally for the ride of his life.

The Combat Simulation

The third part of the Battle of Endor again involves clearing a fighter screen—this time, that of the Death Star itself. Along the way, you must destroy the ISDII *Vehement*. After you meet these other goals, fly to RB *Rally Point* to prepare for the final run on the Death Star.

Endor

- Mission time limit: 11 minutes.
- Destroy ISDII *Vehement*.
- Clear fighter screen.
- Fly within 1 km of Rendezvous Buoy *Rally Point*.

Phase 4: Death Star Tunnel Run

The access tunnel was not a large space, but Ace's time in the Pilot Proving Grounds had prepared him well. Perhaps even hooliganism has its place.

Ace maintained his shields, shifting laser energy to the engines for speed. Little time remained before the Death Star used its superlaser on another Rebel capital ship. Ace suspected their next target would be the CRS *Independence*.

It was a harrowing flight through interior tunnels that forced Ace to roll and twist the *Millennium Falcon* constantly to avoid collisions. It would have challenged even me. Making the run even more frantic, TIE fighters had followed the Rebel group in, destroying a couple of fighter escorts.

General Calrissian ordered Ace to target and lock onto the strongest power source. This turned out to be the core power generator. Ace locked it into the *Falcon*'s memory. The primary tunnel was blocked at a junction, and Ace had little time to think. He turned the *Falcon* down an alternate tunnel. General Calrissian ordered Gray Group to clear the primary tunnel, which must serve as an escape route.

Ace flew through the narrow tunnels at incredible speeds. He scraped the *Millennium Falcon* only once or twice, losing the ship's communications antenna. It was close, but Ace had been through worse. I, however, did not look forward to telling Chewbacca. The prospect of being swatted with my own detached limb was unappealing. C-3PO tells some stories ....

On the way to the Death Star's core reactor, Ace confronted a series of rings reminiscent of the proving grounds. Containers flowed through them, making the clearance tight. Wedge Antilles, following in his X-wing, announced there was no other way out of the chamber they were in; General Calrissian suggested they go through. Ace was already on his way.

Soon Ace had an opportunity to target and destroy the Death Star's superlaser control node. In the next few seconds, the *Falcon* emerged into the Death Star's superlaser chamber. Quickly, Ace and Wedge destroyed the nodes, damaging the superlaser's lens. Then they destroyed the pulse modulator panels, and the superlaser shut down. For the moment.

Ace got the *Falcon* out of the chamber the way it had entered before the superlaser attempted to fire again. The small Rebel team continued maneuvering through the interior tunnels, once passing through a "brightly lit, diamond-shaped chute" that ended with another junction. Ace just followed the locked reactor signal and made his choice. It was the right one.

Fig. 13-4. The Accelerator Chamber

Fig. 13-5. Disabling the Superlaser

Ace rushed down a long, squared tunnel of smaller piping and wiring until he saw a chamber ahead. He slowed the *Millennium Falcon* slightly, not knowing what to expect. The locked reactor signal was still too distant.

As the Rebels entered the strange chamber, new readouts appeared on the CMD: Zero G Stormtroopers were setting up a turbolaser at the entrance to the next tunnel.

Need I say that Ace destroyed the turbolaser before it was functional? Of course not. By now, you know our boy Ace nearly as well as I. Three Zero G Stormtroopers also met their demise during the brief skirmish.

The *Millennium Falcon* entered the cleared tunnel. Ace closed the distance to the locked reactor to 8 km, and then 6 km, as he sped down a smaller tunnel of denser piping.

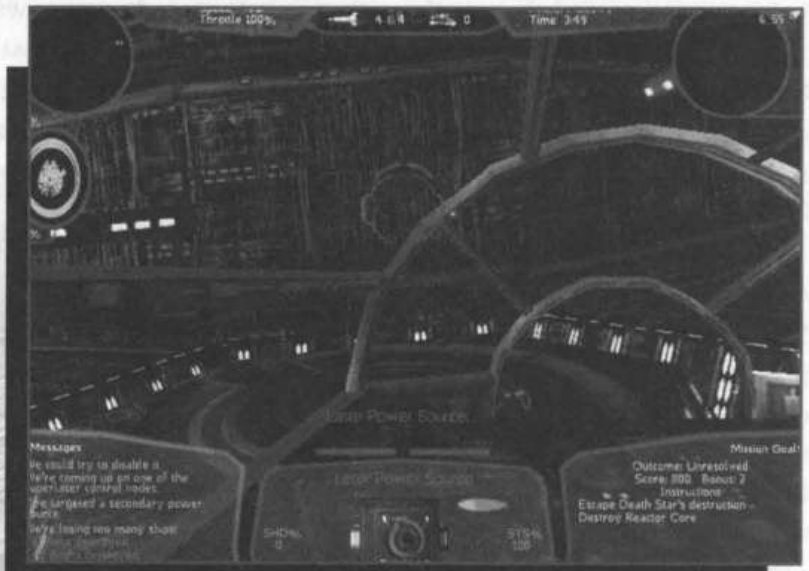


Fig. 13-6. The Y Junction

When he approached another brightly illuminated, cross-shaped tunnel, Ace knew another large chamber lay ahead. The distance registered for the reactor indicated the critical moment was at hand.

As they swept into the reactor chamber, General Calrissian told Wedge to destroy the power regulator on the north tower. Wedge locked on and took it out.

Now it was up to Ace and the *Millennium Falcon*. Wisely, he had saved his missiles; now it was time to let them go. He dual-linked the missiles and fired them all at the core from point-blank range, turning at the last second to avoid the explosions.

Fig. 13-7. The Core

The reactor began to rumble. The Death Star was doomed.

General Calrissian informed Rebel command the task was complete and that he and Ace were on their way out. The Sullustan accompanying Ace and Lando was pleased to hear it. Admiral Ackbar immediately ordered the Rebel fleet to move away from the Death Star.

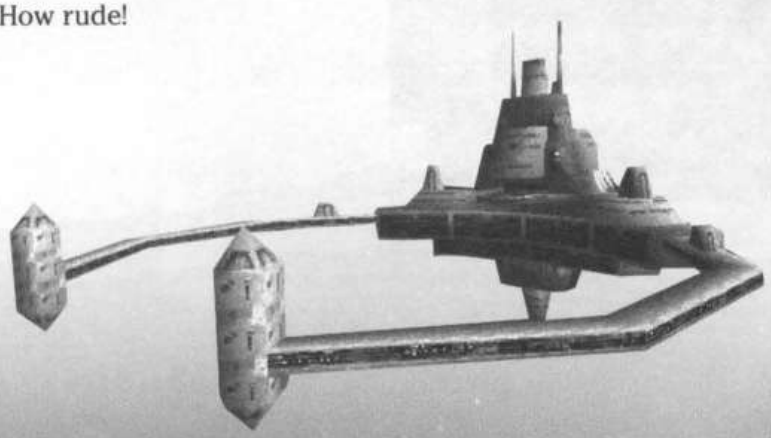
Ace had only seconds to escape back through the tunnels. The erupting core expanded outward at an alarming rate. The tunnels filled with flames and a destructive force that threatened to engulf and destroy the *Millennium Falcon*.

But Ace was no longer a rookie pilot. The experience he had gained—first in the Pilot Proving Grounds, and later from his victories against pirates, mercenaries, and Imperial fighters—proved invaluable. The *Millennium Falcon* shot from the exploding Death Star to safety.

The galaxy was saved.

And not once did any of the celebrating Rebels, including Ace, mention the heroic deeds of a certain MK-09 Kalibac Industries maintenance droid named *Emkay*.

How rude!



The Combat Simulation

The Death Star tunnel run makes for some grueling flying. It is almost always possible to fly through without shooting any obstacles, as long as you have enough time to react. There are, however, a few infrequent combinations of randomly generated tubes and crossbars that can be impassable without shooting. Make a habit of looking all the way to the end of a tunnel section (or farther, if the angle of approach permits), so you can plan two or three turns ahead. If you consistently find you don't have enough time to react, slow down; you should be safe at speeds as slow as 76.

The accelerator chamber can be tricky. You must time your entry so you don't hit a block. It can help to let go of the joystick once you are reasonably lined up, so you don't accidentally bump it and go careening into the tunnel walls while accelerated. The far end of the accelerator is a perfect place to maneuver and get the TIEs off your back. The autoturret will help you avoid crashing into things.

If you go for the superlaser control, your window of opportunity is brief. Unless you can turn around and get out immediately, you will be caught when the superlaser misfires, frying everything nearby. Using your energy settings to maximize maneuverability can make a crucial difference.

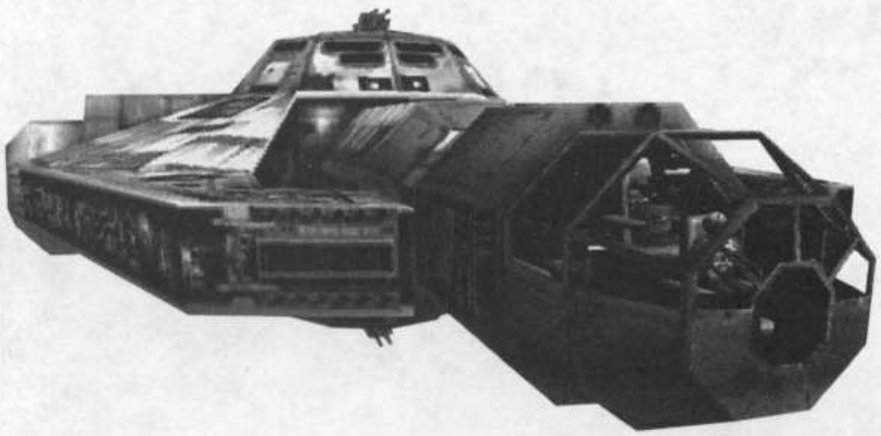
The Zero G Stormtroopers are, as usual, vulnerable to the autoturret, as is the tripod-mounted turbolaser. The *Millennium Falcon* will not fit into the exit tube if it enters parallel to the turbolaser deck; rotate 90 degrees.

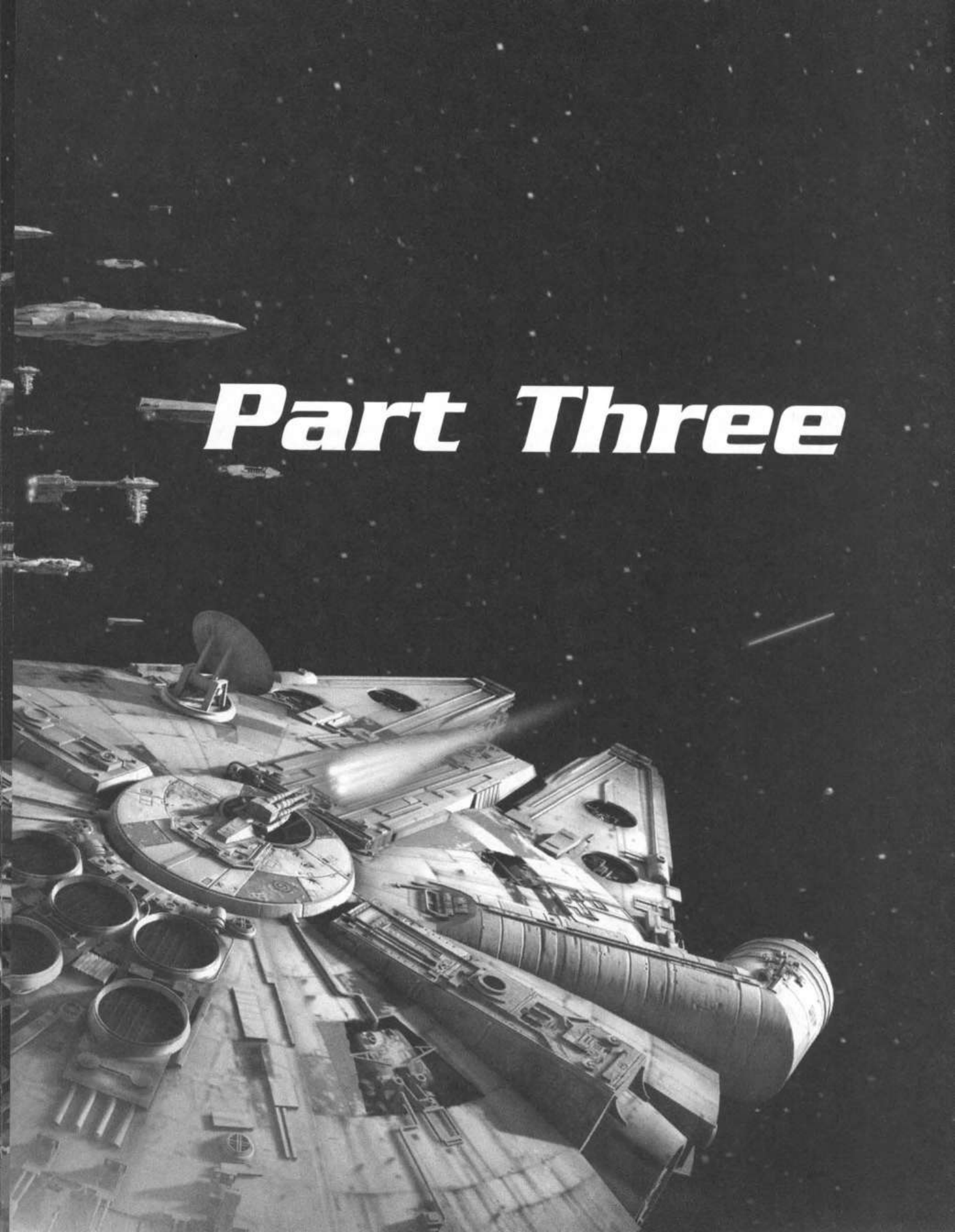
Fig. 13-8. The Correct Angle of Approach

In the core chamber, wait for Wedge's missiles to hit the north tower before launching yours at the reactor. You want to be on your way out when the warheads hit, so start turning as soon as they're away. On your way out, you must move at 102 or so to stay ahead of the explosion.

The Death Star

- Avoid obstacles until you reach the accelerator chamber.
- Pass through the chamber. Clear the TIEs at the end.
- Avoid obstacles until Y junction.
- At the Y junction, decide whether you want to go for the superlaser. Target the superlaser controller to determine which fork to take.
- Take out the Zero G Stormtroopers and the turbolaser (or just run down the tunnel).
- Fire two concussion missiles at the reactor.
- Fly out at 102 or faster.





Part Three

Command Decision in the Combat Simulator

Chapter 14
Building a Skirmish Template

Combat simulator software was standardized long ago and is roughly the same all over the galaxy. This means scenarios created for one combat simulator are fully compatible with any other, allowing for the rapid proliferation of new strategies and tactics.

Building the Template

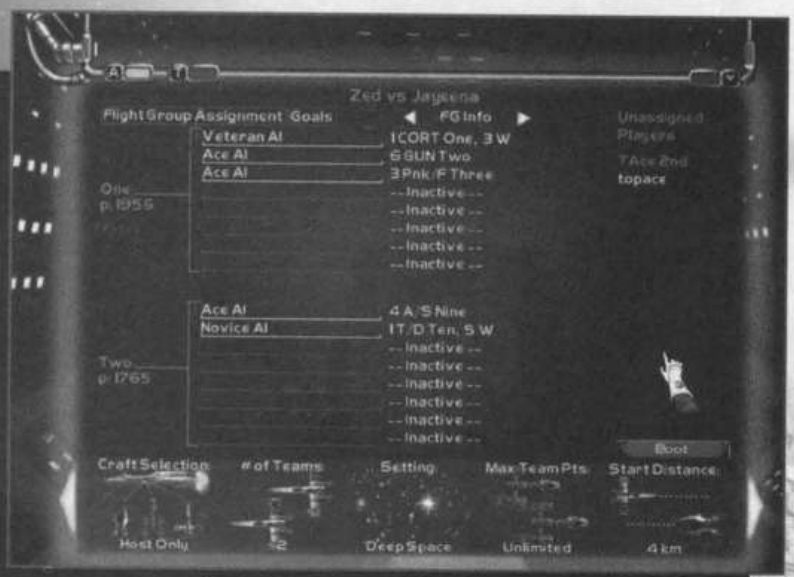


Fig. 14-1. The Flight Group Assignment Screen

The host of a combat simulator session selects the scenario template. Although the option exists for each participant to customize his or her own flight group, the following text assumes the host makes all decisions.

It takes skill and planning to design a scenario that's challenging and balanced for all players.

Goal Types

There are two general categories of Skirmish template. A Melee template is an exercise in piloting skills, without the structure and limitations of combat. Pilots receive unlimited waves of craft, and mission objectives are never more complex than to destroy everything.

A Combat Engagement template, on the other hand, more closely simulates the limitations of battle. Pilots receive a limited number of craft, and mission objectives vary considerably.

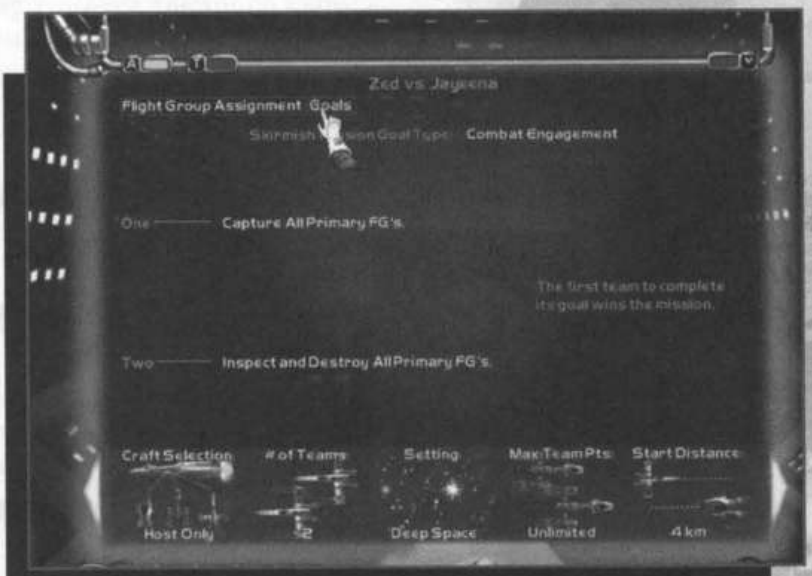


Fig. 14-2. The Goals Screen

Selecting Number of Teams

The number of teams in a conflict affects all other aspects of template generation. Battles involving more than two sides are rare, even when many factions are represented, so increasing the number of teams beyond two decreases the range of possible objectives.

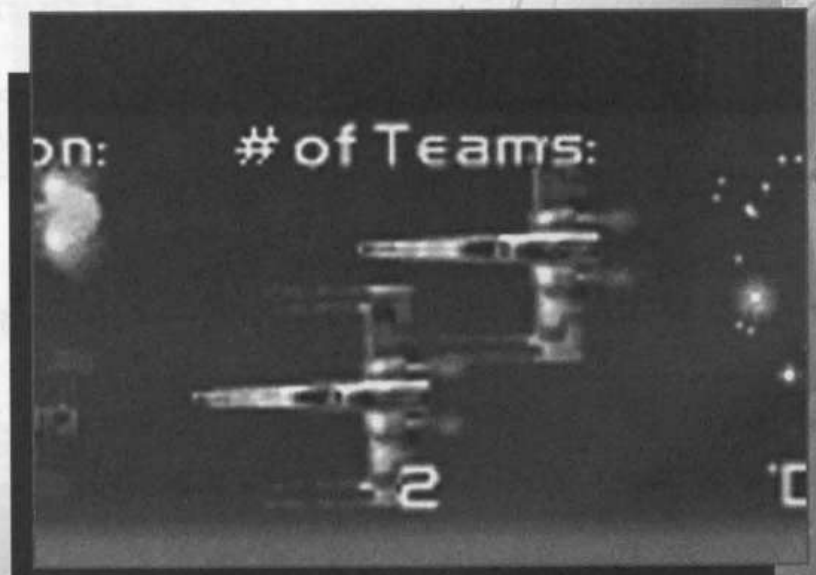


Fig. 14-3. Number of Teams Button

Choosing Objectives

Before going any further, the host must determine each team's goal. Without knowing the objective, it's difficult to make wise decisions when equipping a team. Again, the kinds of goals available will vary depending on the number of teams.

Destroy All Flight Groups

This is the most straightforward objective, if not the easiest. Destroy every craft on every opposing team. The last team with something left alive wins.

Destroy All Primary Flight Groups

Another straightforward goal, this one requires only that you destroy enemy primary targets. A red exclamation point next to the flight group slot indicates a team's primary flight groups.

Capture All Primary Flight Groups

This is potentially the most complex objective. Only flight groups with capture duty can capture other craft. Capturing requires disabling the target, so it's important that capturing craft have disabling weapons, such as ion cannons or ion pulse warheads. Optionally, the team's other flight groups can be given disable duty.

This goal is available only for two-team conflicts.

Inspect All Primary Flight Groups

This is by far the easiest objective, so give this fact careful consideration when choosing team goals. If one team has the inspect goal and any other team has any other goal, it would be wise to severely limit the inspecting team's point total. A tenth of the points other teams get might not be too severe.

This goal is available only for two-team conflicts.

Inspect and Destroy Primary Flight Groups

This goal adds almost as much strategic complexity as the capture goal does. It can prevent a scenario from degenerating into wave after wave of rockets dumb-fired from 8 klicks out. It's wise to have a fast craft, such as an A-wing or a TIE advanced, on a team with this goal.

This goal is available only for two-team conflicts.

Scaling Team Points Based on Goals

The following table contains suggested team-point cost adjustments based on team goals. To balance teams with different goals, multiply the maximum team points allowed by the number corresponding to the goal. (Use this only if any teams have different goals.)

Team Point Cost Multipliers

Goal	Multiplier
Destroy All FGs	0.8
Destroy All Primary FGs	.65
Capture All Primary FGs	1
Inspect All Primary FGs	.1
Inspect and Destroy All Primary FGs	.9

Configuring Flight Groups

After assigning goals, the host determines which craft will participate. Balance each team in relation to all other teams, taking into account the relative difficulty of each team's goal.

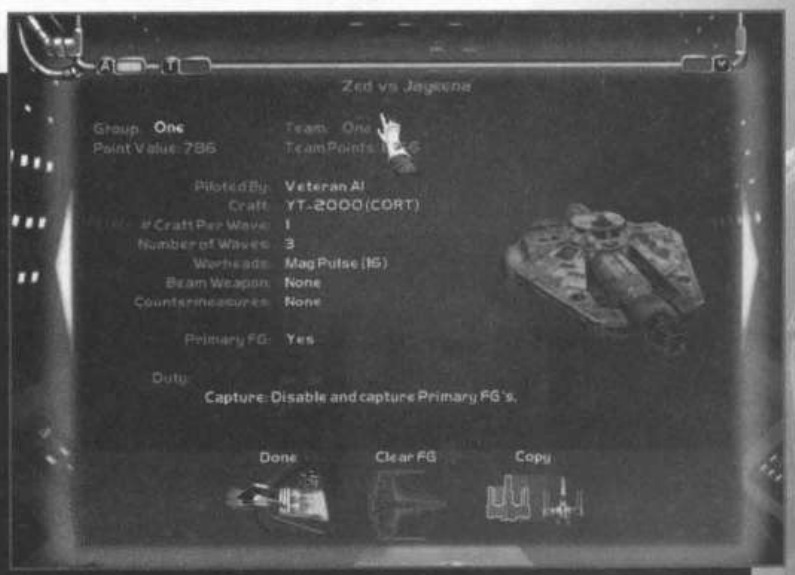


Fig. 14-4. Flight Group Configuration

Craft Types

Again, goals are an important consideration when choosing team craft. If one team's goal is "Destroy All Primaries," for example, balance the other team's primary flight groups against the abilities of the first team's strike craft. Point costs give a relatively accurate estimation of each craft's capabilities in relation to other craft. Chapter 15, "Spacecraft Specifications," provides detailed information about the abilities of each ship.

Artificial Intelligence Level

A craft's AI level dramatically affects its effectiveness—and its point cost. The following table lists the point-cost multiplier for each AI level.

AI Level Point-Cost Multipliers

AI Level	Multiplier
Novice	1
Officer	1.5
Veteran	2
Ace	3
Top Ace	4
Super Ace	5

Warheads

Using warheads can be crucial for taking out large targets. But some pilots, especially those with slow connections to other combat simulators, find this frustrating. Take the other participants into account when choosing warheads.

For a detailed analysis of the tactical impact of each warhead type, see the "Weapon Systems" section in Chapter 2.

Countermeasures

Countermeasures have varying degrees of usefulness, depending on the opposing team's craft configurations. Flares are devastating against unshielded craft, so make sure your pilot has significant strengths in other areas, or you'll be setting that pilot up for a world of pain. Chaff renders most beam weapons useless, and so can be a useful balancing factor.

Beam Weapons

Beam weapons are expensive, and rightfully so. The changes they impose on the tactical environment can shift the balance strongly in the beam-weapon user's favor unless steps are taken to mitigate their effectiveness. Decoy beams, in particular, can unbalance things by rendering a pilot virtually immune to attacks from AI craft.

Duties and Primary Targets

You probably have some idea of what you want each craft to do, but it can be a good idea to evaluate the duties of all craft as an interrelated system. That is, balance the flight groups against one another based on how you think they'll interact. This includes designating primary flight groups.

Individual duties differ depending on goal type. If the goal calls for the inspection or capture of primary craft, duties that normally result in the destruction of primary craft will disable them instead.

Superiority

Fighters and transports with Superiority duty will attack enemy fighters and transports. If none are available, they'll attack primary targets. Other craft with Superiority will attack all nonprimary enemy craft (unless all enemies are primary).

Strike

Fighters and transports with Strike will attack primaries, then nonprimary fighters and transports. Other craft assigned to Strike duty will attack primary targets, then move on to nonprimaries.

Escort

Craft assigned to Escort duty will attack anything that attacks one of your primary targets. If your goal is to capture or inspect, this might cause problems if the craft attacking your primary target is a primary target itself, because the escort craft could destroy it.

All targets considered in the following descriptions are assumed to be on a team other than your own.

Disable

Fighters and transports assigned Disable duty will disable primaries, and then make standard attacks on enemy fighters and transports. Other craft set up to disable will attack all other craft if no primary targets exist to disable.

Capture

You can assign Capture duty only to fighters and transports. They'll disable and capture primary targets, attacking nonprimaries if no primaries are available. Note that you can assign Capture duty *only* to craft that can capture, and only then when the team goal is to capture primary targets.

Recon

A fighter or transport assigned Recon duty will inspect primary targets. After it inspects all primaries, it will attack nonprimary fighters and transports.

No Duty

Craft with no duty just sit there. This can be a legitimate choice for a single craft flight group under the control of a simulator pilot, as it reduces the flight group's point cost.

Environmental Settings

The combat environment—the physical surroundings as well as other, less concrete variables—can have a drastic effect on a battle's outcome. The combat simulator affords options for configuring the combat environment.

Start Distance

This environmental variable probably has the most tactical impact on the scenario. Because capital ship cannon range varies, the distance these craft start at can determine which side has an advantage. For instance, although two Calamari cruisers cost about the same as an Imperial Star Destroyer, the ISD will win every time if it can attack the cruisers from a distance. Starting them at 1 km, however, gives the cruisers a distinct firepower advantage.

Another determining factor is the order in which a flight group appears on the Flight Group Assignment screen. The first flight group on the list is placed the assigned start distance away from the opposing team's first flight group. In scenarios with more than two teams, all first flight groups are spaced equidistantly. Subsequent flight groups are placed randomly behind.

Location

Although the simulator doesn't allow for mimicking specific locations, you can duplicate certain generic physical environments. Deep space is most useful, because it best simulates the environment of day-to-day flight. The asteroid field's effect on the way missions are flown, if any, is slight, but can cause a performance hit on simulators with low-end hardware. The minefield offers the most tactical variation, but at a cost in realism; an endlessly respawning minefield would be extremely valuable, but is not currently available.

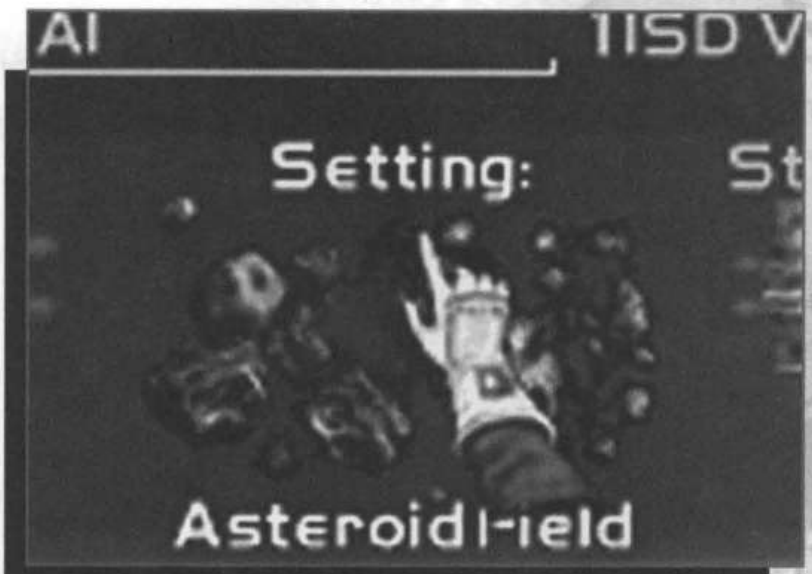


Fig. 14-5. Setting Your Location

Maximum Team Points

The maximum points each team is allowed is the most important factor when pilots configure their own flight groups, and the host can use it to determine roughly how balanced teams are.

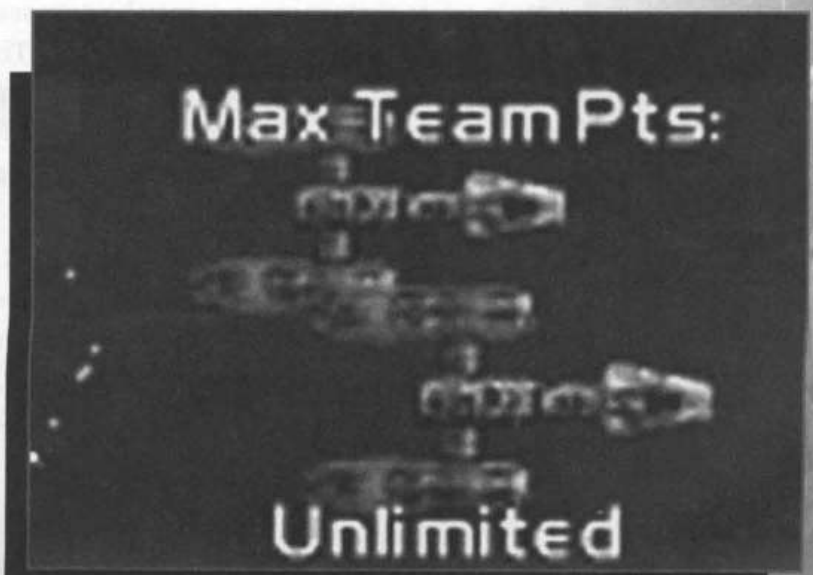


Fig. 14-6. The Max Team Points Button

Classic Example

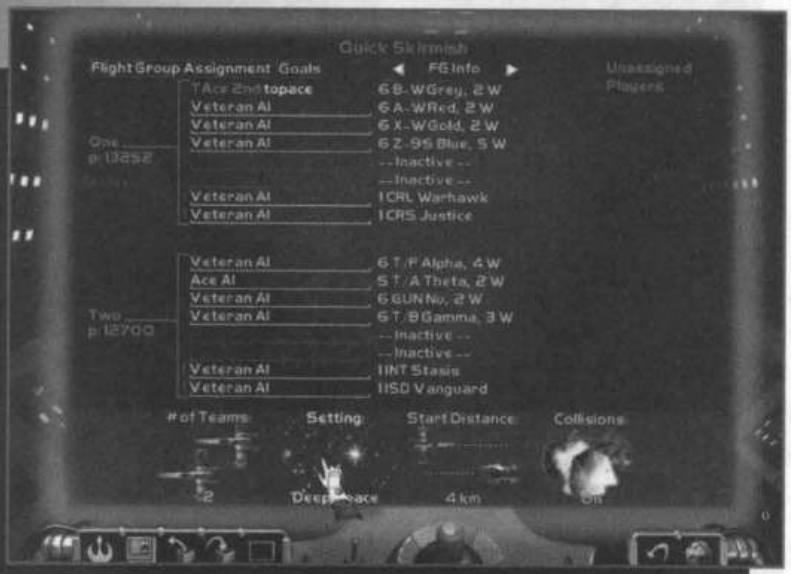


Fig. 14-7. Classic Conflict

The Skirmish template "8P Complex 2 Team Classic Conflict" is an example of a balanced template. Each flight group with the potential to support a simulator pilot is balanced in relation to each other such flight group. Any flight group can win. In a multipilot environment, it can be challenging either as a competitive or a cooperative endeavor, although the latter might require some increases in the opposing team's AI levels.

Balancing Uneven Teams

When one team has more pilots than another, it may be necessary to balance things. One possibility is to give the team with fewer pilots more points to spend. The number of points awarded to the shorthanded team will vary based on its pilots' skill: if the outnumbered pilots are much better than the others, no adjustment will be necessary.

Assuming equal skill (and a two-team engagement), however, here's a formula:

$$\text{Point cost of each outnumbered pilot's flight group} = \text{average point cost of all flyable flight groups} \times \frac{\text{greater number of pilots}}{\text{lesser number of pilots}}$$

Making Competitive Selections

It can be great fun to configure your own team and see what it can do against the best team of equal value your opponent has lined up. Knowing how to create a balanced skirmish will serve you well when it comes time to let pilots configure flight groups themselves. Experience with various craft and weapons combinations will inform your flight group choices within a point limitation. This doesn't always mean choosing the most formidable craft; it may be a more effective use of points to take cheaper craft with better equipment, or with a higher AI level.

A "bargain" can change based on AI level, duty, or pilot style. The AI favors durable craft at Veteran or below, and maneuverable craft at Ace and above. Also, certain craft may be a bargain for some duties and overpriced for others. B-wings, for example, are the best Strike craft available (with the possible exception of the expensive missile boat), but when flying Superiority they're costly for what they accomplish. TIE defenders, on the other hand, excel at any role involving speed or dogfighting, but make mediocre Strike craft.

Capital ships can be great bargains, especially at the Veteran AI level, where they're highly effective for the price. Depending on cannon range, capital ships can excel at Strike, Superiority, or both. Craft with long-range cannons are best for Strike duty, because they can attack anything with less range without taking damage.

Competitive Selection Examples

Two-Team Complex

Zed, a would-be pilot from the Bespin system, and Jayeena, a retired veteran of the Endor Campaign, fly together often in the combat simulator. Jayeena is the better pilot, but Zed is convinced he's the smarter one, and challenges her to a match of competitive selection. They decide on a limit of 2000 points, a starting distance of 4 km, and agree to choose at least one primary target each. Then they choose their goals. Jayeena takes Capture, and Zed decides it would be easiest to destroy only Jayeena's primaries. Jayeena points out that destroying only primaries *is* easier, and asks him to spend only 1600 points. Zed changes his goal to Recon and Destroy, and agrees to spend only 1800.

To maximize her piloting skill advantage, Jayeena builds the most formidable craft possible, the YT-2000. At 190 points, it's extremely powerful for the cost, and versatile, as well. In keeping with the theme of powerful versatility, she chooses mag pulse warheads, a jamming beam, chaff, and one additional wave, for a final cost of 974 points. She makes this her Capture craft and sets herself as the primary target. This leaves her enough to buy six Ace Supa fighters to disable Zed's primaries and three Ace Firesprays for Superiority duty.

Zed must be as efficient as he can with his 1800 points, because he knows Jayeena will feed him his lunch in a one-on-one situation. Because he must inspect Jayeena's YT-2000 before he can destroy it, he needs the best personal ship he can get his hands on. The YT-2000 is tempting, but he opts for the TIE defender. He'll be flying the only ship in the flight group, so he can give it Novice AI and save lots of points. He, too, takes mag pulse, to neutralize Jayeena's turrets. Total cost for five waves is only 685.

Now for his primary flight group. At 270 points apiece, Ace assault shuttles are worth far more than their weight in fighters and should give even a skilled pilot like Jayeena a hard time. Zed selects four and sets them to Superiority duty. This puts him at just under 1800 points, so he's ready to go.

The foregoing match resulted in Skirmish template "Zed vs. Jayeena."

Jayeena, however, decides her configuration isn't quite optimal and switches the Supas to gunboats and the Firesprays to Pinook fighters with advanced missiles. She also loses the jamming beam and takes another wave.

Now that things look fairly balanced, Zed and Jayeena are ready to start.

Chapter 15
Spacecraft Specifications

The craft available in the combat simulator represent a wide cross section of the ships in use in the galaxy at the time of the Emperor's death at Endor. The fighter selection is particularly comprehensive, as the combat simulator was designed principally to simulate fighter combat.

Attributes

Each craft comes with an accompanying point cost, representing its value in combat. The formula used to derive these costs is limited, however, and so "bargain" craft exist that provide more than their point cost indicates. In particular, the formula favors anything with a turret and anything with a greater than average cannon range. Also, because costs are rounded to the nearest ten or hundred, some craft are worth more than you pay.

The following four statistics were averaged to generate base point cost. Point costs for specific ships are assumed to include the default Veteran AI.

Armament

A craft's Armament score represents the number and type of cannons it carries. Because you pay for warheads individually, they aren't factored into the Armament score. (Refer to "Charts and Tables" in the back of the book for a table of cannon type statistics.)

Maneuverability

Maneuverability is an average of a craft's pitch (nose up and down), yaw (nose left and right), and roll (rotation around a central point).

Speed

Speed represents a craft's maximum velocity with its recharge rates all at maintenance. This means craft without shields have deceptively high Speed ratings: they can't turn their shields off to go faster. To translate the score into kilometers per hour, multiply it by .89.

Durability

Durability averages armor and shield strength. Craft with strong shields and weak armor tend to come out ahead and are a good value.

Fighters

The fighters are broken down into point-cost classes, which makes it easier to compare them by worth.

70 Points

Authority IRD (IRD)

Armament:	40
Maneuverability:	27
Speed:	115
Durability:	18
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8

The IRD is a solid, affordable fighter. It lacks maneuverability and is no better than average at anything else, but it's a decent fighter for the price.

Pinook Fighter (Pnk/F)

Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	35
Speed:	107
Durability:	13
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	2

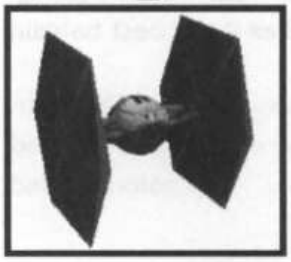
The Pinook is another low-end bargain. It's a little slower than the IRD, but a lot more maneuverable.

TIE Bomber (T/B)

Armament:	40
Maneuverability:	36
Speed:	90
Durability:	20
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8

The Empire's basic warhead platform, the TIE bomber is a passable design. Its lack of shields makes it especially vulnerable to ion cannons and turbolasers, and it's not suited to much besides launching its warheads and then returning to the Star Destroyer that spat it out.

TIE Fighter (T/F)

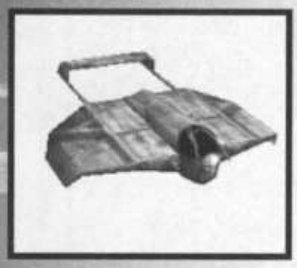


Armament:	40
Maneuverability:	40
Speed:	112
Durability:	10
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—

The TIE fighter, as most civilized beings know, is the mainstay of the Imperial Navy. Fast, maneuverable, and easily mass-produced, this craft complements good dodging skills. In AI vs. AI battles, however, it doesn't fare well against more durable ships.

80 Points

CloakShape Fighter (Clk/F)



Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	30
Speed:	105
Durability:	39
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8

A workhorse in many a mercenary force, the CloakShape fighter is about average for its price class. Although its durability is slightly better than average, the CloakShape has no particular strengths or weaknesses. At 80 points, it's a good buy.

Firespray (FRS)

Armament:	40
Maneuverability:	30
Speed:	102
Durability:	59
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	10

Don't let anyone talk to you about its speed, carrying capacity, or distinctive shape. Boba Fett chose the Firespray as the base chassis for *Slave 1* because it could take a tremendous beating. Strictly average in all other respects, the Firespray's amazing durability makes it the best bargain in the 80-point class.

Preybird Fighter (Pry/F)

Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	34
Speed:	112
Durability:	21
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

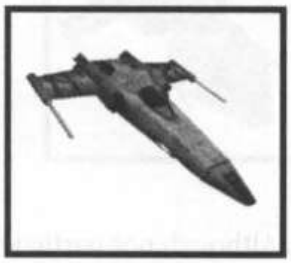
The Preybird Fighter is a favorite of mercenaries, pirates, and anyone else who might favor its swooping, intimidating lines. It's certainly not its exceptional performance that makes it popular; the Preybird is strictly average across the board. This craft was one of the first to use an automatic gun harmonization system, and it's a good thing: the normal spread on the guns is so wide, you'd be lucky to hit a corvette broadside without some sort of laser convergence.

T-wing (T-W)

Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	32
Speed:	125
Durability:	12
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8

The fastest craft in its point class, the T-wing is an ideal interceptor. Its speed is its only real advantage, and it's very fragile.

Z-95 Headhunter (Z-95)



Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	37
Speed:	112
Durability:	12
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	6
Gun Harmonization:	Manual

Although it's more maneuverable than the T-wing, the Z-95 sacrifices speed. Because of that, and because manual gun harmonization is a necessary component of the Z-95, the T-wing is probably a better choice.

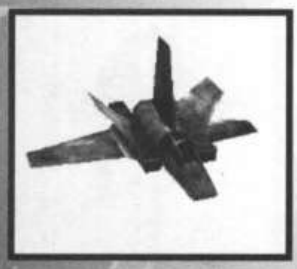
90 Points

A-wing (A-W)

Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	40
Speed:	135
Durability:	20
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	12

The Alliance A-wing is perhaps the greatest bargain in the 90-point range. Its combination of maneuverability and speed makes it a supreme Superiority craft, capable of engaging the formidable TIE advanced on nearly equal footing.

Assault Gunboat



Armament:	80
Maneuverability:	33
Speed:	101
Durability:	40
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	16

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the A-wing is the assault gunboat. Although not particularly fast, it's both durable and well-armed. The gunboat's warhead capacity equals that of the fabled B-wing, but it has nowhere near the armament. This is the best Strike craft in its class, if you can afford all the warheads.

Planetary Fighter

Armament:	50
Maneuverability:	31
Speed:	155
Durability:	17
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	6

The fastest ship in its point class, the planetary fighter is fragile, and its maneuverability and armament are only average. For situations or piloting styles that reward raw speed, however, it's ideal.

Pursuer Enforcement Ship (PES)

Armament:	60
Maneuverability:	28
Speed:	106
Durability:	57
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	1
Warhead Capacity:	4

The Pursuer is one of those cases where the whole is less than the sum of its parts. More durable than most craft, and with better-than-average armament, it doesn't just *look* like a flying brick. The PES is best used as a capture craft, or for Strike duty, if your warhead budget is small.

R-41 Starchaser (R-41)

Armament:	90
Maneuverability:	31
Speed:	112
Durability:	15
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Manual

The R-41 is a multirole fighter. But what it gains in versatility, it loses in effectiveness. In other words, it's not particularly good at anything. It's fragile, yet not particularly fast or maneuverable. Its cost is high because of its high armament score. There are better choices for any task an R-41 might perform.

Razor Fighter (Rzr/F)

Armament:	90
Maneuverability:	35
Speed:	110
Durability:	20
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Manual

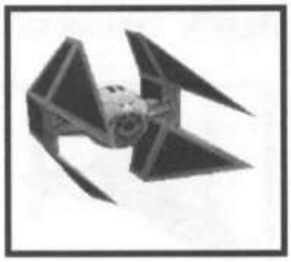
The Razor fighter is everything the R-41 wants to be. It's imperceptibly slower, but noticeably more maneuverable and durable. In any situation where you're tempted to use the R-41, consider using the Rzr/F instead.

Supa Fighter (Sup/F)

Armament:	60
Maneuverability:	38
Speed:	100
Durability:	40
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	1
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

The Supa Fighter provides a powerful combination of maneuverability and durability. In the right hands, it's not only difficult to hit, but can soak up the few hits it takes. Its speed is only a little below average, so its dodging ability isn't hindered.

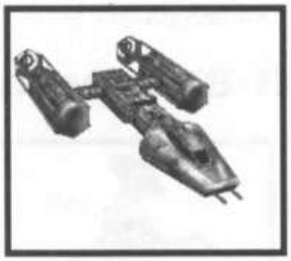
TIE Interceptor (T/I)



Armament:	80
Maneuverability:	43
Speed:	124
Durability:	13
Lasers:	4 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

The TIE interceptor is great for seat-of-your-pants flying. In fact, with no shields, and not much armor, that's the only kind of flying you can do. The speed rating looks very high, but that's deceptive, because you don't have the option of turning shields off to go faster.

Y-wing (Y-W)

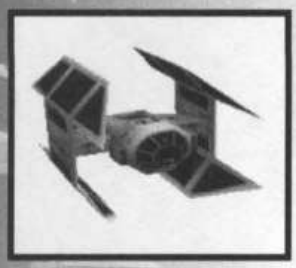


Armament:	90
Maneuverability:	25
Speed:	90
Durability:	39
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	12

This venerable starfighter is inferior in every way to the assault gunboat. Use the Y-wing only if you need a heavy Strike craft, and don't want to pay for a gunboat's warhead load.

100 Points

TIE Advanced (T/A)



Armament:	80
Maneuverability:	43
Speed:	150
Durability:	17
Lasers:	4 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

The TIE advanced could be the best bargain available. Even its weakness—low durability—is deceptive, because its shields recharge very quickly. Although unsuitable for Strike, Disable, or Capture duty, the T/A excels at everything else.

X-wing

Armament:	100
Maneuverability:	32
Speed:	112
Durability:	23
Lasers:	4 Rebel
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

The X-wing is a versatile multirole craft, but it's a bit pricey considering what you get. The Razor fighter is probably a better bet, by virtue of its ion cannons.

110 Points and Above

Toscan Fighter (Tos/F)

Cost:	110
Armament:	140
Maneuverability:	30
Speed:	97
Durability:	29
Lasers:	4 Rebel
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Manual

This heavily armed fighter isn't fast, agile, or particularly durable. It can neutralize lighter fighters in one fire-linked shot, however. Four lasers pound through to the hull, and then the two ion blasts, trailing slightly behind, disable the target. This ship works well with a tractor beam.

B-wing (B-W)

Cost:	120
Armament:	135
Maneuverability:	29
Speed:	102
Durability:	56
Lasers:	3 Rebel
Ions:	3
Warhead Capacity:	16
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

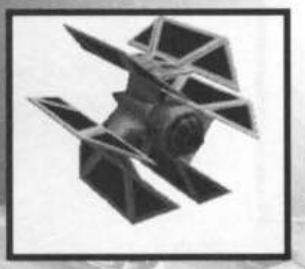
The B-wing is the ultimate Strike craft. It's pricey—if you don't plan to make extensive use of its cannons, the gunboat is a better buy—but for sheer destructive power the B-wing should be your starfighter of choice.

Skipray Blastboat (S/B)

Cost:	130
Armament:	100
Maneuverability:	27
Speed:	102
Durability:	58
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	3
Warhead Capacity:	6
Built-in Warheads:	6 Missiles

The Skipray blastboat is very expensive, but in some situations it can be worth it. Its ability to carry two kinds of warheads makes it slightly more versatile than the B-wing, but at a cost in raw destructive power. The Skipray's lack of speed and maneuverability, and the fact that it makes a huge target, render it more of a sitting duck than its stats might indicate. The missiles can be worth it; otherwise, the B-wing is the better choice.

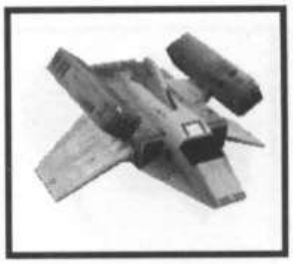
TIE Defender (T/D)



Cost:	130
Armament:	120
Maneuverability:	44
Speed:	162
Durability:	32
Lasers:	4 Empire
Ions:	2
Warhead Capacity:	8
Gun Harmonization:	Auto

This is the best starfighter available, period. The fastest and most maneuverable craft in the galaxy, this masterpiece of military engineering is also near the top of the list for armament. Even its durability is higher than average. In the right hands, this craft is a bargain at any price.

Missile Boat

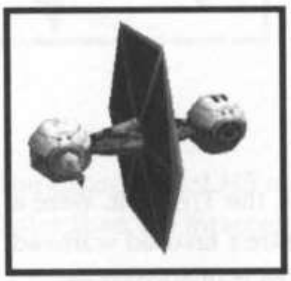


Cost:	210
Armament:	20
Maneuverability:	40
Speed:	137
Durability:	40
Lasers:	1 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	40
Built-in Warheads:	40 Missiles

Although few missile boats exist in reality, the simulator replica is a common sight in engagements without point limitations. Because it can carry a whopping 80 missiles, its lack of significant cannon firepower is no problem. In fact, most pilots turn the peashooter off, especially if they're using a beam weapon.

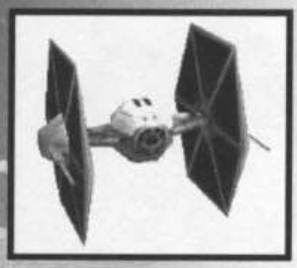
Experimental TIEs

TIE Experimental M1 (T/e1)



Cost:	120
Armament:	160
Maneuverability:	38
Speed:	117
Durability:	11
Lasers:	1 Super Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—

TIE Experimental M2 (T/e2)



Cost:	170
Armament:	320
Maneuverability:	38
Speed:	112
Durability:	10
Lasers:	2 Super Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—

Both the T/e1 and its successor, the T/e2, explore the concept of mounting starship turbolasers on a starfighter. Overall, the result is less than impressive. Although these fighters can dish out tremendous damage, their fragility renders them less useful.

TIE Experimental M3

Cost:	60
Armament:	0
Maneuverability:	41
Speed:	115
Durability:	13
Lasers:	—
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	16

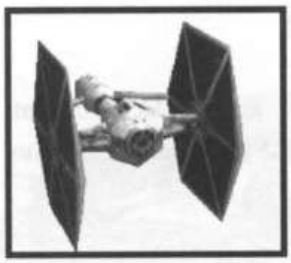
If any design fits the Empire's tendency to use effective yet disposable fighters, the T/e4 is it. Were a piloted version available, it would quickly replace the TIE bomber as the Empire's favored warhead delivery system. As a cheap platform for launching many warheads fast, the T/e4 is unsurpassed.

TIE Experimental M4 (T/e4)

Cost:	80
Armament:	0
Maneuverability:	40
Speed:	162
Durability:	25
Lasers:	—
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—

This "fighter" is nothing more than a big, fast, flying bomb. It carries an explosive payload to a target. End of story. And, most likely, end of target.

TIE Experimental M5 (T/e5)



Cost:	90
Armament:	40
Maneuverability:	36
Speed:	150
Durability:	11
Lasers:	2 Empire
Ions:	—
Warhead Capacity:	—

The Experimental M5 might have been an attempt to replace the TIE interceptor. Although certainly faster than the interceptor, the T/I will beat it consistently.

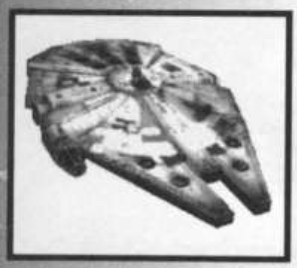
Transports

Transports are the workhorses of the spaceways. They can range from unarmed civilian people-movers to some of the most formidable military vehicles short of capital ships.

Flyable Transports

Although the combat simulator is primarily for starfighter training, some transports have been adapted for simulator flight. Specifically, Corellian Engineering Corporation has released two of its most popular transports for the combat simulator, and dedicated historians have managed a very accurate representation of the *Millennium Falcon*.

YT-1300 Corellian Transport (CORT)



Cost:	120
Armament:	125
Maneuverability:	29
Speed:	100
Durability:	70
Warhead Capacity:	8
Lasers:	1 Rebel
Turrets:	1 Double Rebel

As a light cargo carrier, the YT-1300 Corellian transport is everywhere in the galaxy. As a combat vessel, its advantages are hard to overlook. It may be slow and ungainly, but gun turrets are the best weapons available.

YT-2000 Corellian Transport (CORT)

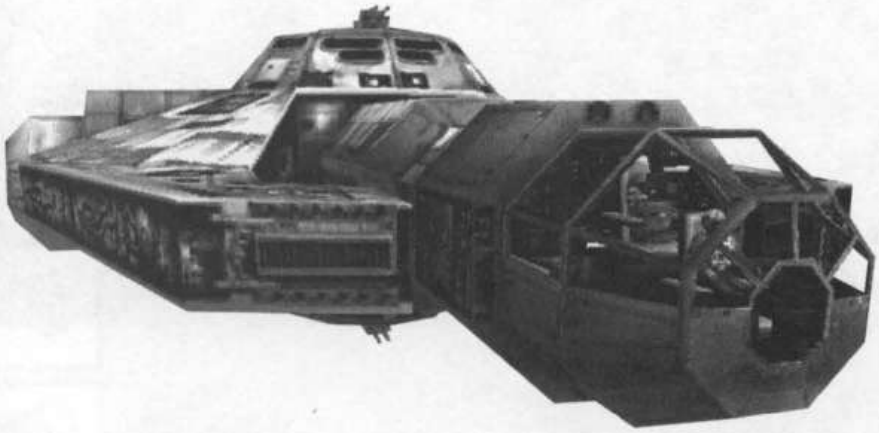
Cost:	190
Armament:	245
Maneuverability:	31
Speed:	107
Durability:	140
Lasers:	1 Rebel
Ions:	1
Turrets:	2 Double Rebel

It's rumored the engineers at Corellian Engineering Corporation had trouble convincing an Imperial regulatory commission that the YT-2000 was a civilian vessel. It's heavily armed and armored, and is amazingly agile for a craft of its size. At only 190 points, this craft is the ultimate bargain.

Millennium Falcon

Cost:	190
Armament:	250
Maneuverability:	34
Speed:	115
Durability:	120
Lasers:	2 Rebel
Turrets:	2 Double Rebel

Famous throughout the galaxy, the *Millennium Falcon* is a highly modified YT-1300. It's similar in performance to the YT-2000, and costs the same. The YT-2000 is better for Capture duty, and the *Falcon* for Superiority, but they're more or less interchangeable—unless you must disable something; this the *Falcon* can't do.



Nonflying Transports

Noncombatants

These transports aren't generally considered combat vehicles, even though some are armed. The exception is the stormtrooper transport, easily as effective as fighters of the same cost.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability	Speed	Durability
	Ferryboat Liner	F/L	60	—	18	25	128
	Landing Craft	L/C	100	120	27	80	45
	Luxury Yacht 3000	LT3000	40	—	18	80	20
	Shuttle	SHU	120	180	27	75	60
	Stormtrooper Transport	TRN	80	80	18	62	69

Combat Transports

All these transports were designed to fill an active combat role. All can be useful for Superiority duty, by virtue of their multiple automated gun turrets. Each can destroy its point value in fighters, assuming both have Veteran AI.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability	Speed	Durability
	Assault Shuttle	A/S	180	320	24	75	90
	Assault Transport	ATR	210	400	24	75	125
	Escort Shuttle	E/S	130	140	28	82	75
	Escort Transport	ETR	280	540	24	67	132
	Muurian Transport	MUTR	150	275	30	100	24
	Scout Craft	SCT	190	300	20	87	110
	System Patrol Craft	SPC	360	640	22	87	250
	YT-2400	CORT	170	200	32	115	116

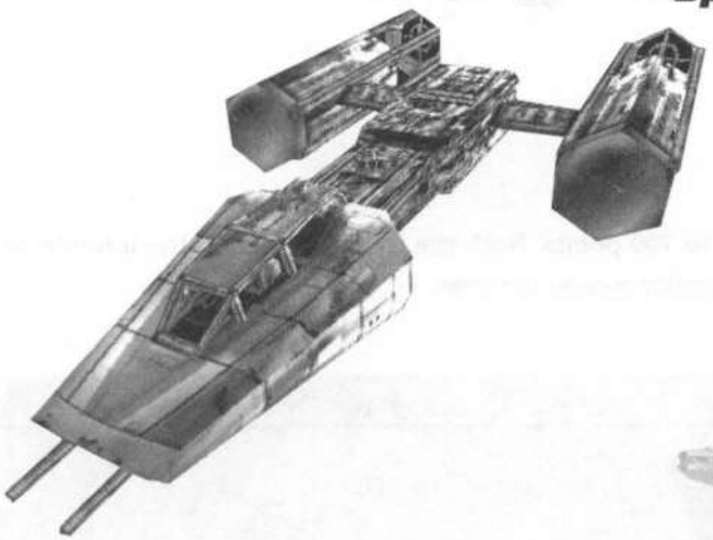
Starships

These large ships tend to be well worth the point costs, especially for taking out fighters. Higher AI levels, especially, will make a capital ship a nearly unbeatable investment—at least until the dumb-fired mag pulse torpedoes start flying.

Small

Small capital ships cost up to 300 points at Veteran. There are two outstanding bargains in the point class. The corvette can take out craft of nearly twice its point cost, assuming equal cannon range, and the *Lancer*-class frigate has a greater than average cannon range.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability
	Corellian Gunship	GSP	270	500	4
	Corvette	CRV	300	600	6
	Lancer Frigate	L/FRG	300	480	3
	Modified Corvette	M/CRV	260	480	6
	Nebulon B Frigate	FRG	300	400	3
	Passenger Liner	LINER	200	—	3



Speed	Durability	Strike Cannons	Superiority Cannons
32	196	Rebel 2 km	—
25	200	Double Rebel 2 km	—
22	304	Double Empire 3.5 km	—
25	220	Double Empire 2 km	—
20	480	Double Rebel 2 km	—
20	480	—	—

Medium

Medium starships range in cost from 400 to 700 points. Both the bulk cruiser and the Interdictor stand out in this category, due to their superior weapons range.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability
	Bulk Cruiser	B/CRS	500	400	2
	Carrack Cruiser	CRKC	400	500	3
	Escort Carrier	ESC	500	360	3
	Interdictor	INT	700	760	2
	Marauder Corvette	M-CRV	500	320	6
	Modified Frigate	M/FRG	700	1520	3
	Strike Cruiser	STRKC	500	500	3

Speed	Durability	Strike Cannons	Superiority Cannons
12	912	Double Empire 3.5 km	—
20	464	Double Rebel 2 km	—
15	880	Double Empire 2 km	—
10	1072	Turbo Empire 3.5 km	Double Empire 2 km
20	960	Double Empire 2 km	—
22	400	Super Empire 2 km	Double Empire 2 km
20	800	Double Rebel 2 km	—

Large

Large starships cost from 800 to 1100 points. The outstanding bargains of this point class are the VSD and VSDII for Strike duty, and the CRS for Superiority.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability
	Assault Frigate	A/FRG	1000	1600	2
	Calamari Cruiser	CRS	1100	1100	2
	Calamari Cruiser Type 2	CRS	1100	1100	2
	Dreadnaught	DREAD	800	1200	2
	Imperial Research Ship	SRS	1100	—	3
	Light Calimari Cruiser	CRL	800	1300	2
	Victory Star Destroyer	VSD	1000	1360	2
	Victory II Star Destroyer	VSDII	1100	1510	2

Speed	Durability	Strike Cannons	Superiority Cannons
17	1072	Double Turbo Rebel 3.5 km	Double Rebel 3.5 km
25	1920	Heavy Turbo Rebel 4.5 km	Double Rebel 2 km
25	1920	Heavy Turbo Rebel 4.5 km	Double Rebel 2 km
15	1040	Double Turbo Rebel 3.5	Double Rebel 2 km
10	2960	—	—
15	832	Super Rebel 2 km	Double Rebel 2 km
10	1600	Turbo Empire 3.5 km	Double Empire 2 km
10	1440	Turbo Empire 3.5 km	Double Empire 2 km

Huge

Huge starships dominate any engagement in which they take part. An Imperial or Imperial II Class Star Destroyer is better than any combination of capital ships with an equivalent point cost. The Super Star Destroyer is the same way, only on a much larger scale. Note that all Star Destroyers have vulnerable shield generators, and this makes starfighters a serious threat.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability
	Imperial Star Destroyer	ISD	2400	4200	2
	Imperial II Star Destroyer	ISDII	2700	5000	2
	Super Star Destroyer	SSD	19500	5680	2

Stations and Static Defenses

The combination of a station and other static defenses can provide an alternative to capital ships. Luring your opponents into a heavily defended area never hurts, unless they were headed there anyway.

Stations

The core of any defensive strategy, a good station will give you a place to run if you're overwhelmed. Hiding in a hangar or some other protected interior area can give you time to recharge. Just take care that another human pilot doesn't figure out where you are and nail you where you have no room to maneuver.

Armed Stations

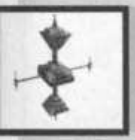
All the armed stations have the standard laser range of about 2 km. Golans I through III are the best bargains by virtue of their high Armament scores.

Speed	Durability	Strike Cannons	Superiority Cannons
12	2400	Double Turbo Empire 6 km	Double Empire 2 km
12	2640	Double Turbo Empire 6 km	Double Empire 2 km
12	48000	Heavy Turbo Empire 6 km	Double Empire 3.5 km

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Durability	Strike Cannons	Superiority Canno
	Asteroid Hangar	R&DFC	1000	960	1840	Double Empire	—
	Factory	FAC/1	800	800	1280	Double Rebel	—
	Golan I	G/1	1200	1600	1600	Double Rebel	—
	Golan II	G/2	1600	1600	2800	Double Rebel	—
	Golan III	G/3	1900	1600	3600	Double Rebel	—
	Platform 1	PLT/1	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Platform 2	PLT/2	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Platform 3	PLT/3	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Platform 4	PLT/4	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Platform 5	PLT/5	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Platform 6	PLT/6	700	720	1280	Double Empire	Empire
	Rebel Platform	BASE	1100	1400	1760	Rebel	—

Unarmed Stations

Unarmed stations are suitable for eye candy, or for attempting to mimic a real combat, but they have no place in competitive selection. Although it might seem like a good idea to give your opponent a big, distracting target, their lack of guns makes these craft extremely vulnerable to warhead attacks. They usually don't last long enough to be much of a distraction.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Durability
	Asteroid Mining Unit	AMU	200	560
	Cargo Facility 1	C/F1	300	720
	Cargo Facility 2	C/F2	500	1440
	Casino	CAS	400	1120
	Communications Relay	C/RLY	300	800
	Derilyn Platform	D/P	400	1040
	Family Base	BASE	500	1360
	Family Repair Yard	RY/2	500	1392
	Imperial Research Center	IRC	1700	4640
	Industrial Complex	FAC/2	200	624

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Durability
	Pirate Ship Yard	SHPYD	300	864
	Processing Plant	PP	100	352
	Repair Yard	RY/1	1700	4800
	Sensor Array	S/ARY	300	800
	Shipyard	SHPYD	1700	4800
	Space Colony 1	SC/1	300	720
	Space Colony 2	SC/2	200	672
	Space Colony 3	SC/3	300	832

Mines

Mines come in lots of six. If you choose a two-ship flight group of Type 3 mines, you'll have 12 mines in flight.

	Craft	Cost	Cannon
	Mine 1	30	Empire
	Mine 2	30	Ion
	Mine 3	30	Empire

Weapon Emplacements

Weapon emplacements usually orbit platforms or other permanent structures, augmenting their defensive firepower significantly. Avoid the large gun/weapon emplacement; it's fragile and can't carry warheads.

An interesting tactic is to set up a base with an asteroid theme in an asteroid field. The asteroid hangar and asteroid-based weapon emplacements differ somewhat in appearance from regular asteroids, but in the heat of battle they can pass.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament
	Asteroid Laser Battery	LAS BAT	110	160
	Asteroid Warhead Launcher	WLNCHR	50	—
	Gun Platform	GPLT	90	160
	Large Gun Emplacement	G/P	260	640
	Large Gun/Warhead Emplacement	GW/P	250	640
	New Ion Battery	I/B	100	80
	New Laser Battery	L/B	100	80

Maneuverability	Speed	Durability	Cannons
26	25	100	Double Empire
26	25	100	—
26	25	36	Double Empire
26	25	30	Empire
26	25	30	Empire
26	25	151	Ion
26	25	151	Empire

Freighters and Other Craft

Freighters

Trade forms the backbone of any interstellar society. Because trade requires some sort of ship to transport the goods, freighters of all types are a common sight. Strive to become familiar with their weaknesses.

Armed Freighters

Armed freighters make marginally useful Superiority craft if no capital ships are present to harass them. They can take out their point cost in fighters and can be selected in groups of up to six, as with smaller craft.

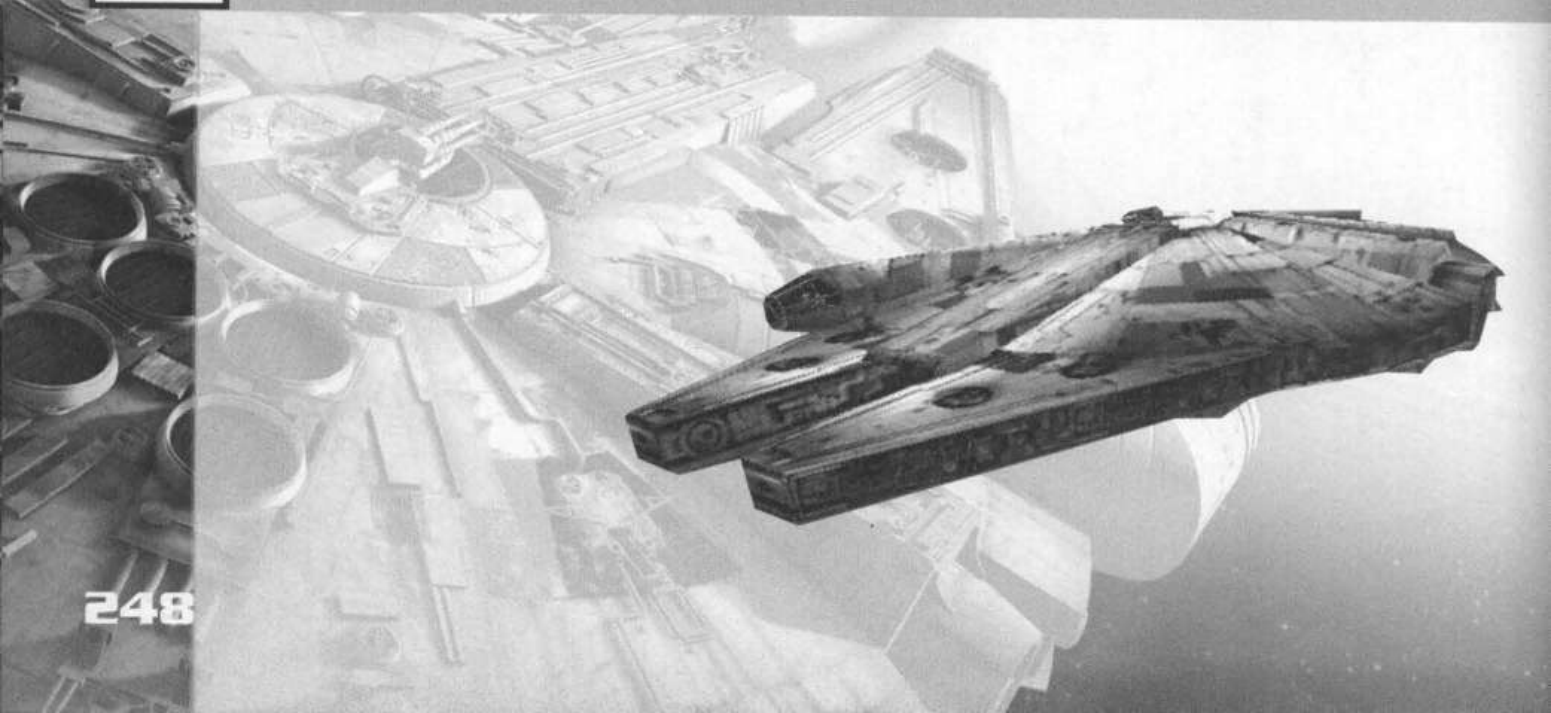
	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament
	Cargo Ferry	CARG	90	120
	Container Transport	CTRNS	150	150
	Modified Action Transport	M/TRN	280	600
	Modular Conveyor	CNVYR	120	150
	Star Galleon	STARG	350	720
	Suprosa	MOB	360	320
	Xiytiar Transport	Xiy/T	140	200

Maneuverability	Speed	Durability	Cannons
12	25	88	Empire
14	37	220	Rebel
12	22	132	Double Rebel
12	30	144	Rebel
14	20	200	Double Empire
12	17	648	Double Empire
12	20	144	Rebel

Unarmed Freighters

Again, these craft have no place in a competitive environment unless all sides have them. They're targets or eye candy, nothing more.

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Maneuverability	Speed	Durability
	Bulk Freighter	FRT	60	12	20	124
	Freight Transport C	Frt/C	60	12	17	140
	Freight Transport H	Frt/H	60	12	17	140
	Freight Transport K	Frt/K	60	12	17	140
	Mobquet Transport	MOB	60	12	17	144
	Medium Transport	MTRNS	60	12	20	144



Other Craft

Everything that could be said about unarmed stations or freighters can be said about containers or utility vehicles. They do, however, make decent, cheap primary targets when your focus is on building a large force of fighters.

Utility Craft

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Maneuverability	Speed	Durability
	Combat Utility Vehicle	CUV	80	34	75	20
	Escape Pod Type 1	E-Pod	30	30	50	10
	Escape Pod Type 2	E-Pod	30	41	25	10
	Heavy Lifter	HLF	50	32	50	45
	Mole Miner	Miner	30	25	25	30
	Tug	TUG	30	41	37	7

Containers

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Durability
	Cargo Canister	C/C	5	20
	Container A Brick	CN/A	10	48
	Container B Hexbox	CN/B	5	44
	Container C Tube	CN/C	10	48
	Container D Pronged	CN/D	5	24
	Container E Hemisphere	CN/E	5	32
	Container F Slotted	CN/F	10	48
	Container G Hourglass	CN/G	10	48
	Container H Gem	CN/H	5	28
	Container Hangar	CN/Hgr	15	88
	Container I Y-shaped	CN/I	10	48

	Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Durability
	Container J Grande	CN/J	10	52
	Container K Box	CN/K	5	20
	Container L Sphere	CN/L	5	20
	Pressure Tank	Pr/Tk	5	28

New Features for the Upgrade

The disk that comes with your copy of this strategy guide contains an upgrade to the final version of X-Wing Alliance. This includes the Film Room—a way to record your single-player exploits and play them back.

Installing the Upgrade

Before installing the update, be sure you have installed the full version of **X-Wing Alliance**. For the best results with the Film Room, we recommend a full install of the game.

If Autoplay is enabled on your computer, Setup launches when you insert the disc in the CD-ROM drive. If Autoplay is not enabled, follow these steps:

1. Right-click on the CD-ROM icon
2. Choose Open
3. Double-click on the Setup icon

You will be prompted to update your current version of **X-Wing Alliance.** This update installs the files necessary to run the Film Room and incorporate the Mission Updates.

After the update installs, you have the option to install the Tutorial Film Clips and Skirmish Template Files. If you don't install these files, you'll still have access to the Film Room, but the Film Clips designed for the strategy guide won't be installed. You can easily install the Film Clips at any time after the initial installation.

When installation is complete, insert the **X-Wing Alliance** CD into your CD-ROM drive—you are ready to fly.

Using the Film Room

Press Shift F in flight to begin recording a film. When you wish to stop recording, press Shift F again. Quitting or restarting a mission also ends the recording.

When the recording stops, you have the opportunity to save your film or cancel the process. To save it, name it using the dialog window that pops up; then press Enter. Pressing Esc cancels the save. If you chose not to save the film when prompted to do so, it will be lost.

To watch a film, use the Film Room door in the lower-right corner of the Concourse (or the button in the Combat Simulator, before the Concourse becomes available). Select the film you wish to watch and either double-click on it or highlight it and click the Load icon.

Once the film is loaded, it will, by default, show everything in the mission using the point of view from which you originally experienced it—the Follow default mode. Free mode lets you move your camera around, position it behind other craft, or track a ship's flight.

Film Playback and Camera Commands

Command	Function	Description
R	Restart Film	Rewinds film to beginning
P	Play Film	Plays film if it is stopped
S	Stop/Step Frame	If film is playing, stops it; if stopped, advances one frame
F	Fast Forward	Plays film quickly
Q	Quit	Takes you back to film selection
Ctrl End	HUD View	Displays HUDs as they were during recording
/	Toggle Mode	Toggles between Free mode and Follow mode
C	Drop Camera	Releases camera from whatever it's focusing on; then you can use the joystick to move the camera as in Map mode
T	Next Target	Selects next target around which you can rotate the camera
Y	Previous Target	Selects previous target around which you can rotate the camera
G	Track Next Object	Using the camera's current location as a pivot point, tracks selected object
H	Track Previous Object	Using the camera's current location as a pivot point, tracks selected object
*8	Reset View	Returns you to Free mode's default camera position

New Skirmish Templates

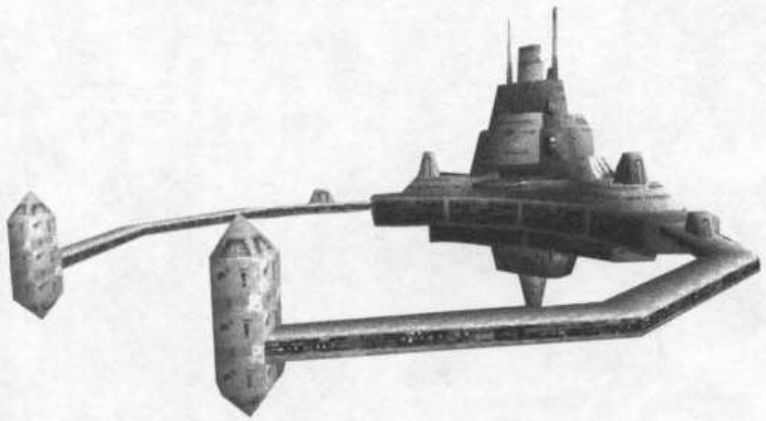
The disk includes two new Skirmish templates, beyond those used for tutorial purposes.

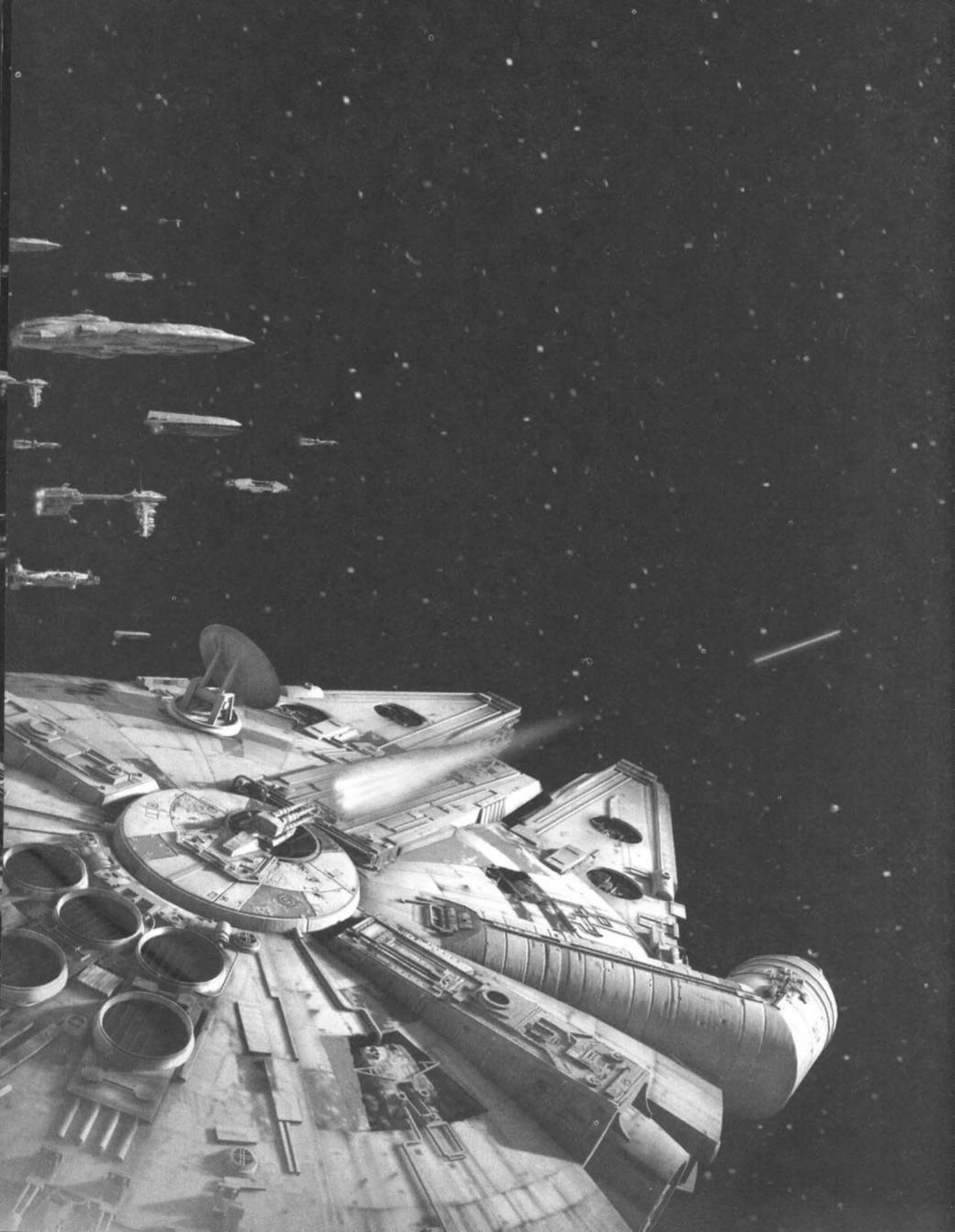
4P Complex 4-Team Pirate Feud

This skirmish pits four identical groups of pirates against one another for dominance of an asteroid field.

8P Complex 8-Team Pull the Plug

This is an ordinary B-wing melee—with a twist. Adding a bulk cruiser to each team brings up the issue of whether to ignore them and let them rack up kills or take the time to eliminate them.





Charts and Tables

Cannon Statistics

Cannon Type	Damage
Rebel Laser	250
Double Rebel Laser	500*
Turbo Rebel Laser	600
Double Turbo Rebel Laser	750
Heavy Turbo Rebel Laser	1000
Super Rebel Laser	1500
Empire Laser	200
Double Empire Laser	400*
Turbo Empire Laser	750
Double Turbo Empire Laser	1000
Heavy Turbo Empire Laser	1200
Super Empire Laser	1600
Death Star Empire Laser	1000000
Ion Cannon	200D
Turbo Ion Cannon	400D
Super Ion Cannon	800D

* = Starfighter lasers behave as lasers of this type when double-charged

D = disables instead of dealing hull damage

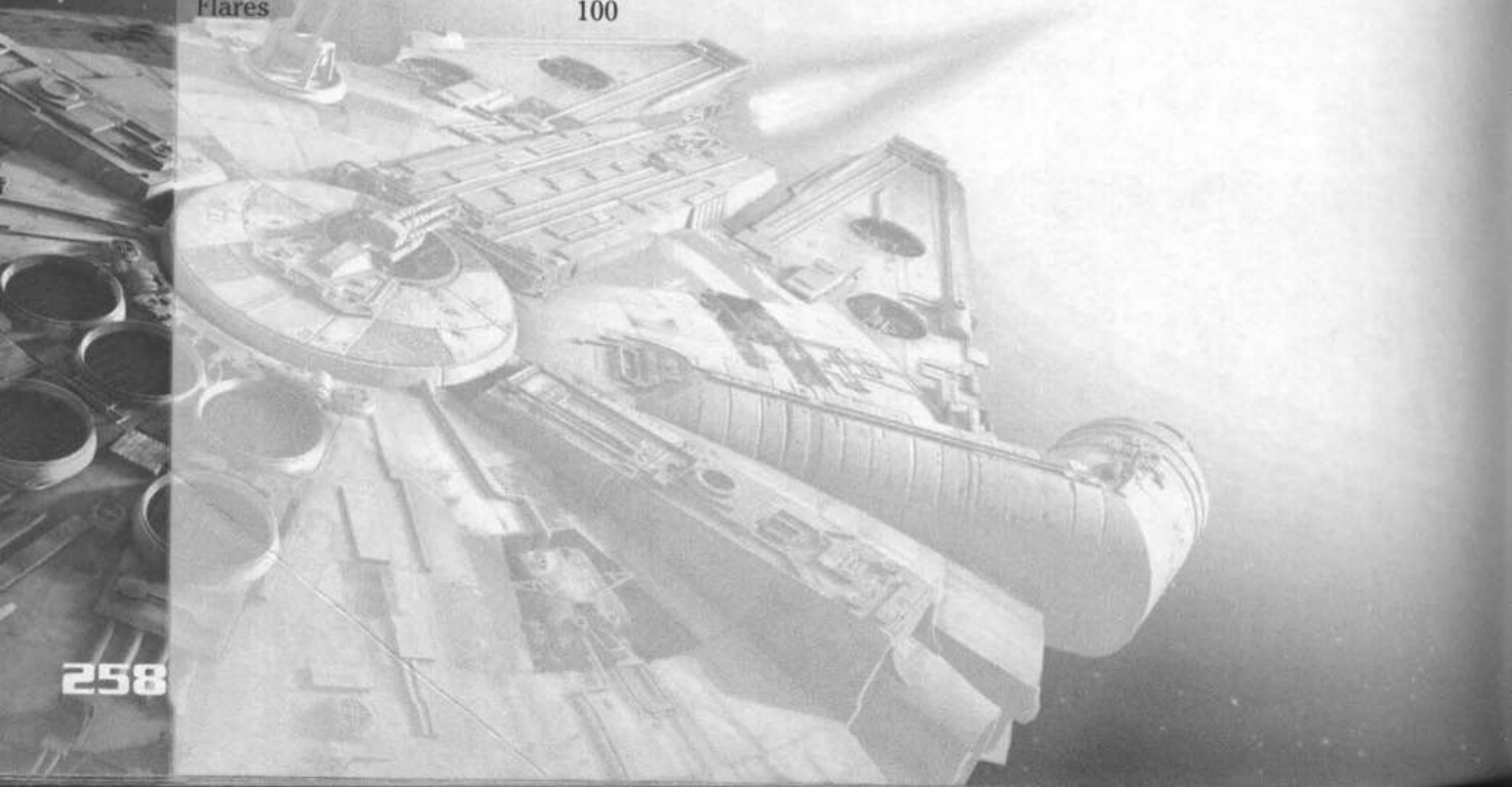
Warhead Statistics

Warhead Type	Damage	Cost
Concussion Missile	3000	6
Advanced Missile	6000	15
Proton Torpedo	10000	9
Advanced Torpedo	15000	15
Heavy Rocket	35000	24
Space Bomb	65000	45
Mag Pulse	— S	9
Ion Pulse	6000D	9
Flare	500	6

S = suppresses cannon fire for 15 seconds
D = disables instead of dealing hull damage

Beam Weapon and Countermeasure Statistics

System Type	Cost
Jamming Beam	75
Tractor Beam	100
Decoy Beam	200
Chaff	150
Flares	100



Fighter Quick Reference

Craft	Abbreviation	Cost	Armament	Maneuverability	Speed	Durability	Lasers	Ions	Warhead Capacity
X-wing	X-W	100	100	32	112	23	4 Rebel	—	8
Y-wing	Y-W	90	90	25	90	39	2 Rebel	2 Ion	12
A-wing	A-W	90	50	40	135	20	2 Rebel	—	12
B-wing	B-W	120	135	29	102	56	3 Rebel	3 Ion	16
Z-95	Z-95	50	80	37	112	12	2 Rebel	—	6
TIE Fighter	T/F	70	40	40	112	10	2 Empire	—	—
TIE Interceptor	T/I	90	80	43	124	13	4 Empire	—	—
TIE Bomber	T/B	70	40	36	90	20	2 Empire	—	8
TIE Advanced	T/A	100	80	43	150	17	4 Empire	—	8
TIE Defender	T/D	130	120	44	162	32	4 Empire	2 Ion	8
Missile Boat	MIS	210	20	40	137	40	1 Empire	—	40/40#
Assault Gunboat	GUN	90	80	33	101	40	2 Empire	2 Ion	16
TIE Experimental M1	T/e1	120	160	38	117	11	1 Super Empire	—	—
TIE Experimental M2	T/e2	170	320	38	112	10	2 Super Empire	—	—
TIE Experimental M3	T/e3	60	—	41	115	13	—	—	16
TIE Experimental M4	T/e4	80	—	40	162	25	—	—	—
TIE Experimental M5	T/e5	90	40	36	150	11	2 Empire	—	—
Authority IRD	IRD	70	40	27	115	18	2 Empire	—	8
Toscan Fighter	Tos/F	110	140	30	97	29	4 Rebel	2 Ion	8
T-wing	T-W	80	50	32	125	12	2 Rebel	—	8
R-41 Starchaser	R-41	90	90	31	112	15	2 Rebel	2 Ion	8
Skipray Blastboat	S/B	130	100	27	102	58	2 Empire	3 Ion	6/6#
CloakShape Fighter	Clk/F	80	50	30	105	39	2 Rebel	—	8
Razor Fighter	Rzr/F	90	90	35	110	20	2 Rebel	2 Ion	8
Planetary Fighter	Plt/F	90	50	31	155	17	2 Rebel	—	6
Supa Fighter	Sup/F	90	60	38	100	40	2 Empire	1 Ion	8
Pinook Fighter	Pnk/F	70	50	35	107	13	2 Rebel	—	2
Preybird Fighter	Pry/F	80	50	34	112	21	2 Rebel	—	8
Firespray	FRS	80	40	30	102	59	2 Empire	—	10
Pursuer	PES	90	60	28	106	57	2 Empire	1 Ion	4

= number of built-in concussion missiles

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ISBN 0-7615-2076-7

9 780761 520764 51999 0 86874 52076 9

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